$4.99 US
COMICS TV/FILM & MORE
BLEEDING COOL
MAY 2014
ISSUE 10
COMIC PRICE GUIDE
SCIENCE FICTION SPECIAL
ALIEN
STAR WARS
STAR TREK
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
JUPITER ASCENDING
PLANET OF THE APES
BOOM! ROSS RICHIE
WWZ & EXTINCTION PARADE MAX BROOKS
JC DE LA TORRE STAR MAGE
TONY MOORE & RICK REMENDER FEAR AGENT
WWW.BLEEDINGCOOL.COM
10011
8 20023 00772 1

BCM #10 Introduction by Rich Johnston

Welcome to the science fiction issue of *Bleeding Cool Magazine*. Due to the vagaries of print publication, this is a voice from the past – although to me it's the present. And while you are reading this in the present, to me that's the far flung (by a month or so) future. So put down your hoverboard, step away from the flying cars and jetpack, and take a moment to read this magazine as it is projected onto the back of the cornea of your eye by a passing nanobot. Yes, you see, I know all about this future you talk about; as I'm writing this on a laptop with, get this, Windows 7. I know I must seem ancient now. But the truth is science fiction is never actually about the future. It's always about the present, with aspects of modern life exaggerated, taken to their logical conclusion, stylised to make a point about the way we live now rather than the way we will live. If, along the way, there are a couple of accurate predictions, that's all for the good.

Next year will be the year of the future as seen in *Back To The Future Part II*. Like it or not, we are living smack bang in the future. There are no hoverboards, there are no flying cars but, apparently, there will be sneakers with automatic laces. You know what, it'll do.

Contents

002 **LIFE IN THE GUTTERS**
By Rich Johnston

005 **REMENDER & MOORE TALK *FEAR AGENT***
By Alex Wilson

011 **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY**
by Brendon Connelly

015 **J.C. DE LA TORRE ON *STAR MAGE***
By Hannah Means-Shannon

022 **ROBOCOP REDUX**
By James Kuhoric

028 **VALIANT: JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED**
By Joshua Kopin

032 **REMODELING MALEFICENT**
By Brendon Connelly

037 **SCI-FI: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?**
By Rich Johnston

045 **35 YEARS OF ALIEN**
By Jeff Spry

048 **ADAPTING THE RUSH**
By Dan Wickline

053 **THE FUTURE OF SCI-FI**
By Brendon Connelly

057 **HARLAN ELLISON'S® "CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER" FINALLY GETS ITS DUE**
by Gavin Lees

064 MAX BROOKS CHALLENGES MILLENIALS
By Tom W. Huxley

070 BRINGING THE BOOM
By Dan Wickline

077 MARVEL'S BRITISH INVASION:
By Rich Handley

089 THE PULL LIST
by James Kuhoric

094 VINTAGE PAPER CHASE
by Mark Seifert & William Christensen

096 HOT COMICS
By Rich Johnston

098 PRICE GUIDE
for Collectors and Sellers

103 BLEEDING COOL DIRECTORY
Retailer List

Bleeding Cool Online

Daily news and opinions about comics, TV, and film: **bleedingcool.com**
Contact: **bleedingcool.com/contact**
Forums: **bleedingcool.com/forums**

Bleeding Cool Staff

William Christensen: Publisher
Mark Seifert: Creative Director
Jim Kuhoric: Editor-In-Chief
Ariana Osborne: Lead Designer
David Marks: Director of Events
Richard Johnston: Head Writer
Brendon Connelly: Staff Writer
Gavin Lees, Dan Wickline, Hannah Means-Shannon, Rich Handley, Alex Wilson, Joshua Kopin, Jeff Spry, Tom W. Huxley: Contributing Writers

All images contained within are TM and ©2014 their respective owners. All rights reserved.

Please direct editorial and retailer inquiries and contributions to Jim Kuhoric: jimkuhoric@bleedingcool.com. Inquiries regarding advertising in Bleeding Cool Magazine or Online should be directed to jimkuhoric@bleedingcool.com. Any statements made, expressed or implied, in Bleeding Cool Magazine are the opinions of columnists or persons being interviewed and do not represent the position of the publisher.

Printed in Canada. Scanned by Monafekk.

Next Issue:
See Inside Back Cover for Details!

Bleeding Cool Magazine Issue #10.
May 2014.
Published by Avatar Press, Inc. 515 N. Century Blvd. Rantoul, IL 61866. ©2014 Avatar Press, Inc.

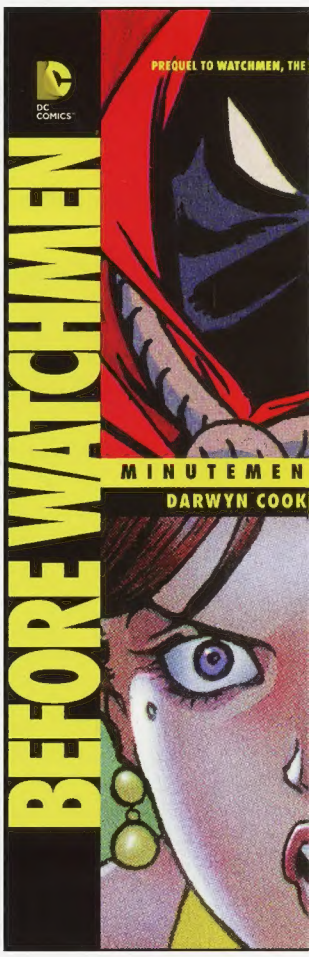
LIFE IN THE GUTTERS
By Rich Johnston

Free range eggs. You see them on the shelf in the superstore, what do you picture? Well, in America, the label only requires that "the bird spends part of its time outside." The rest of the time it can still be crammed in a cage, which has led to variant labelling, "cage free hens" or "barn roaming" to give a better idea of exactly what kind of chicken's egg you are scrambling on your toast. Saying it's free range means that you can taste the freedom... but can you really? Sometimes it seems little more than a marketing tool, and you have to look a lot deeper.

So it is with comics and "creator owned." It's become an equivalent label to sell a book. You get the whiff of freedom from corporate concern, creators free to do as they see fit, and reap the rewards if there are any. But what's really going on?

After all, *Watchmen* was originally promoted as a creator owned comic book, something lauded at the time. Except it appears it was no such thing. Any reversion clause was down to the book being out of print, and DC Comics made sure that didn't happen. Years later, the existence of *Before Watchmen* was proof positive.

Indeed, DC Comics have had a mixed bag when it comes to creator owned comics. Vertigo is known as a line that had a fair few creator owned books, but the "in print" clause can come back to bite people, and Ed Brubaker's attempt to take *Deadenders* to another publisher, suddenly saw DC reissue the trade paperback of that series. However some made it out although there were conditions – Garth Ennis wasn't allowed to take *The Boys* to rivals Marvel... or IDW. But names such as Warren Ellis, Garth Ennis, Mike Carey, they don't take their projects here anymore. Because, while Vertigo never really gave full creator ownership, ex-Warner Bros executive Alan Horn was so incensed by how much ownership the Vertigo contracts gave away that he demanded changes. He got them. And the creators left and looked elsewhere, to Dynamite, to Avatar, to Image, to Dark Horse, to IDW, and to Boom. Some give full creator ownership, others takes some media rights, others represent them, there's a different deal for every publisher, for every creator.



Dark Horse used to attach serious media deal clauses to their creator owned contracts to ensure that if they had a hit, the publisher could make some money off the media rights. And to be fair, Dark Horse has had a better hit rate at getting a movie made from a comic book – even if the movies haven't always been hits. But, considering competition from Image Comics for new titles, Dark

Horse recently dropped that demand for media rights. And I can claim that *The Many Murders Of Miss Cranbourne*, as seen in *Dark Horse Presents*, is 50% owned by me and 50% owned by artist Simon Rohrmuller.

That 50/50 rule is something promoted by the likes of Mark Millar. What you might call the pure creator owned comic. That split, with the attention and sales his books receive, has seen a number of prominent creators attracted to drawing his books. John Romita Jr. owns half of *Kick Ass* and, as a result, his work on the title pays him far more than any other Marvel comic he works on.

But the most successful creator owned comic in recent times, poses a serious question. What happens when one of the creators drops out? Well, in *The Walking Dead*'s case, it goes to court. Moore claimed that he was a co-creator of the book and was conned out of signing away his rights on the comic just before the TV series was signed, Kirkman claimed that Moore was always work-for-hire and that we was the sole creator of the title. It settled out of court for a lot of money. The comic is now drawn by Charlie Adlard, who has no stake in the book, but does get one of the highest page rates in the industry (and can knock out two of those pages a day, plus whatever other project he may be working on for the French). Equally so for other Skybound titles for Image, the major proponent of creator owned comics in the industry are also not owned by the people who are working on them. Same goes for the Top Cow books as well. And a number of the Image Central books, are only owned by the writer, the artist working for hire.

So does it matter? Is a creator-owned book a better read? Do you feel better when reading it? If so... do you want to know any more details? And why should you care at all? Well, if you don't, there's plenty of places selling battery farmed eggs, even if it is all a bit tasteless.

Got a tip for Rich? You can contact him, or any Bleeding Cool contributor, with story tips, comments, questions, or to ask about advertising at: ***BleedingCool.com/contact***

You can join in the conversation at the Bleeding Cool online discussion forum: ***BleedingCool.com/forums***

EARTH WILL BE THE GREATEST HUNT OF ALL.

VALIANT FIRST

ARMOR HUNTERS® CHECKLIST

JUNE

- [ ] **ARMOR HUNTERS #1 (of 4)**
- [ ] UNITY #8 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] X-O MANOWAR #26 (TIE-IN)

JULY

- [ ] **ARMOR HUNTERS #2 (of 4)**
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: BLOODSHOT #1 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: HARBINGER #1 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] UNITY #9 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] X-O MANOWAR #27 (TIE-IN)

AUGUST

- [ ] **ARMOR HUNTERS #3 (of 4)**
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: BLOODSHOT #2 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: HARBINGER # 2 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] UNITY #10 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] X-O MANOWAR #28 (TIE-IN)

SEPTEMBER

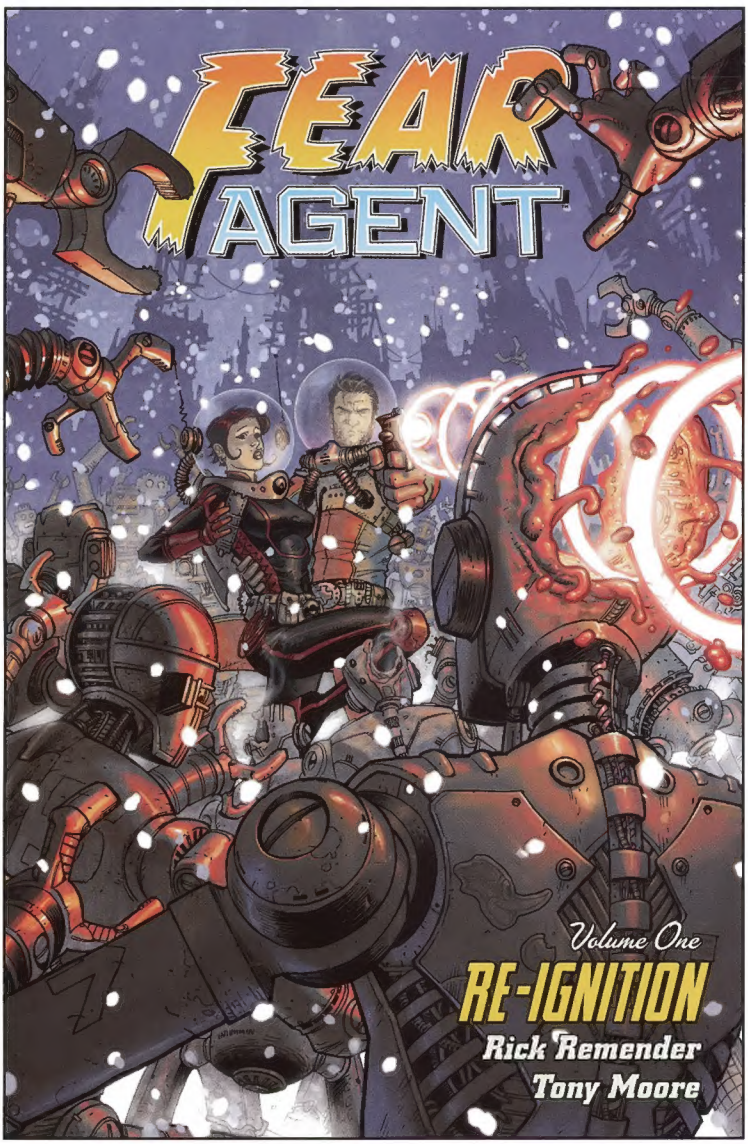
- [ ] **ARMOR HUNTERS #4 (of 4)**
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: BLOODSHOT #3 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] ARMOR HUNTERS: HARBINGER #3 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] UNITY #11 (TIE-IN)
- [ ] X-O MANOWAR #29 (TIE-IN)

© and TM 2014 VALIANT ENTERTAINMENT INC.

REMENDER& MOORE TALK *FEAR AGENT*

By Alex Wilson

Heath Huston jets around the four quads and lets you tag along on his awe-inspiring adventure through space, time, and multiple dimensions. Heath, you see, is a galactic exterminator with a tricky past he's been running from. Unfortunately, or fortunately depending on how you look at it, his past catches up with him and he has to deal with the lot he made for himself and the cards dealt to him, but don't worry. Heath always catches a break.



Published by Image Comics for the first 11 issues and then picked up by Dark Horse, *Fear Agent* calls back to the time of pulp science fiction by creating a world full of mystery, technology, and good old fashion Texas attitude. Every great story has a beginning and this tale doesn't fall from that tradition.

Rick Remender and Tony Moore met in person at Comic-Con San Diego, "commiserating" all weekend about their unlucky allotted spaces at the convention. Porno comic books surrounded them. One, a parody of *Star Wars* that Moore remembers named as "Star Balls" and another general porn comics booth across from them. They both sat frustrated in their respective booths at the end of an isle as convention attendees would look down the isle, see the porno, and assume all booths were the same. Moore and Remender bonded over their love for classic EC comics (Entertaining Comics) that eventually inspired the majority of the aesthetic in *Fear Agent*.

"We'd stayed in touch quite a bit," said Moore, "and I had just done this cover for *Rob Zombie's Spookshow International* that had a big tentaclly space monster and El Super Beast, which is his luchador character with a big bubbly space helmet and I had just sent that thing out into the public. Rick contacted me and said he really enjoyed it. We started talking about EC comics. I was always more of a fan of their horror and crime stuff. I had a

bunch of that stuff in reprints. He asked me I had read any of the sci-fi stuff and I had kind of an odds and ends smattering of it. I didn't have a vast collection of it. We just started talking about our love for EC comics in general and we started talking about how we should do something like that. Within, shit, I'd say, a couple days we had cooked up pretty much all of *Fear Agent* just over the course of a couple phone calls. It was just something that caught fire and we kind of ran with it."

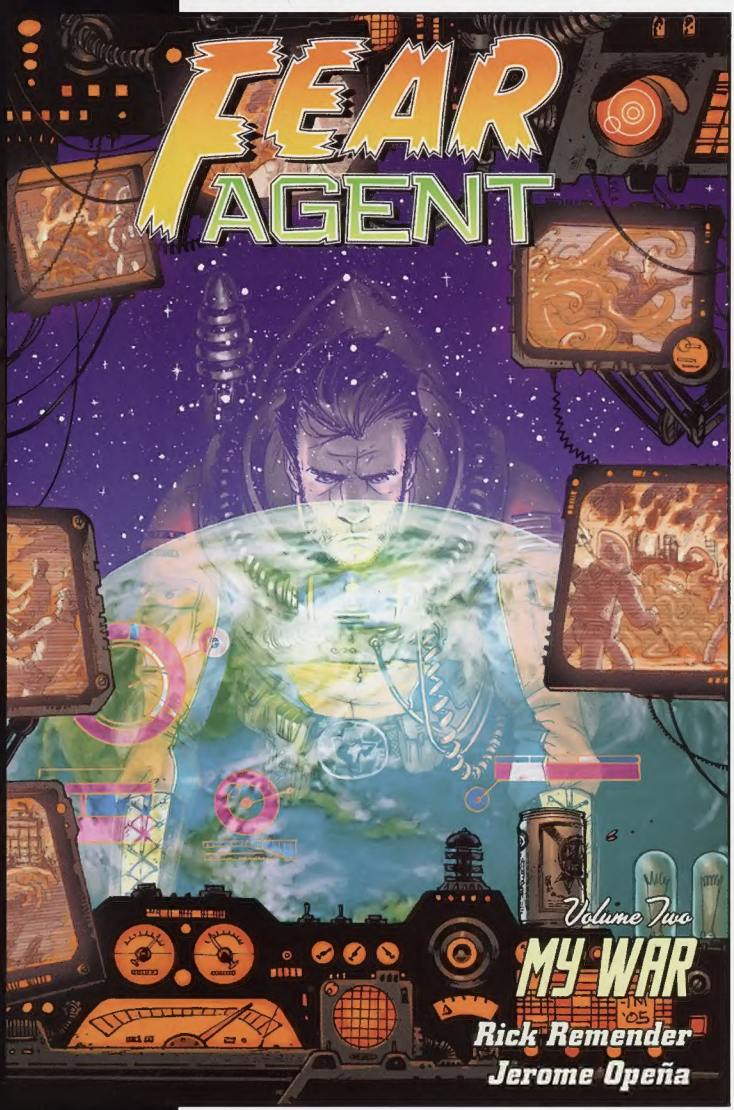
After creating the idea and story the nuts and bolts of turning any comic book from wishful thinking to actual physically tangible work began. "The time that we were doing it in 2004," said Remender, "when we were developing the book, the hard part of it was the hard part of any book, which is finding the money and the schedule time to get people to do it and at that time there wasn't a huge track record for sales of creator owned books. At that point in time, I think, *30 Days of Night* and *The Walking Dead* were considered the biggest hits and they were selling, I think, just over 17 or 18,000 copies a month and then you had books like *Hellboy* that were in and around those numbers as well that were considered sort of perennial staples."

Writing and drawing comics, however, doesn't pay the bills if you're simply following your passion and telling only the stories you want to tell. Both Moore and Remender had to take on other jobs to keep *Fear Agent* afloat and support themselves. "There wasn't an audience and we weren't making money," said Remender. "It's way easier to make a comic book when you have an audience and money."

Fear Agent explores multiple genres within genres. The overall arching theme of the book is science fiction but amid the non-stop action and compelling story exists genre jumping. In "The Last Goodbye," an arc in *Fear Agent*, Remender writes a

story less characteristic of science fiction but, instead, feels more of a call back to World War Two genre comic books. You can also see this genre jumping in "I against I," an act Moore identifies with more than others. "Truth be told," said Moore, "I think the western stuff is the stuff I dug the most. I've been a longtime fan of westerns in general. It's probably the genre of stuff I lust for the creatively the most."

Moore expanded further on his creative work and why he works as a comic book artist. "If you work in comics then you must have a love for it. No one falls into this line of work. I asked Moore what



brought him into this world. "Some sort of sickness I guess, I don't know. It's hard to describe. I mean, it's one of those things. If I laid out the details of everything it took and looked at it on paper I would say only an idiot would want to do this. But here I am and it's how I choose to spend my life so I honestly don't know. I love telling stories. I love working with my friends. I love creating new stuff. The physical act of drawing is very cathartic for me. In the back of my head, there's this notion that each book I put out could be some kids first comic and that's really exciting to me."

Remender started writing *Fear Agent* ten years ago and has since had a successful career in comic books as a writer. He credits *Fear Agent* as a jumping off point that inspired much of his work and gave him confidence to keep writing. "*Fear Agent* is the thing that is the blue print for the most of my work. It's where I think I found my voice and my structure, my preferred structure. It's a very personal work that had Tony Moore and Jerome Opena and Mike Hawthorn and myself, along with a number of other people helping us, dumping our asses into and trying to make something that would last the ages and matter, something we could be proud of for as long as we're on this Earth."

As any writer will tell you if you truly love the story you're telling then you become part of the story so *Fear Agent* turned into a very personal work for Remender, acting as a catalyst for Remender to express himself and vent out his frustrations into a character that very much became an extension of him. "I think when you're reading it you'll have a sense of that I've really sunk into my depression here and let that seep out through Heath. I really, really gone to some dark places and your natural instinct at that point is the throw in some comic

relief and to punch it up a little bit with something light hearted to give the reader a bit of relief from it all. I do my very best to do that when it's applicable to try and do that in most books. I'm depressive by nature and was dealing with a lot of very bad depression during the writing of the middle part of *Fear Agent*. You can see the humor drift away the deeper you get into the series. The tonal shift was definitely part of what was going on with me at the time. A lot of the hard years I was going through and a lot of the depression I was dealing with, Heath sort of became a mouthpiece for that and a place to sort of explore it and vent it. A lot of his story arc reflective of my own and a lot of his opinions are reflective of my own. I ended up dropping a lot of myself into the character."

Every bit of *Fear Agent* connects. It's one giant flowing organism so the book becomes very difficult to put down, wrapping the reader beneath the ins and outs of the story. You get to the end of an arch but some giant world-changing cliffhanger that you could have never guessed happens and you forge on in hopes of discovering what comes next. Remender keeps the reader on their toes as the story unfolds, tossing curve ball after curve ball to make a truly remarkable and unforgettable story experience. You can't help but bond with the characters and embrace their flaws as the flaws are what make us all interesting and it's that human nature that drives *Fear Agent* into my heart.

One can't help but marvel at the amount of detail that went into the story so each piece fit perfectly in place as to create such an overarching story arc. The whole creative team threw all they had into this book and told the story they desired to tell, resulting in something they can feel affection. "The book was

very much a labor of love," said Moore, "for better or worse. It went through some pretty harrowing passes where we weren't sure if it was going to make it and sometimes where Rick and I had to focus on things that were paying the bills when *Fear Agent* wasn't. Rick especially was very bull headed on making sure it got through and that we got to tell the story we set out to tell. He cooked up some really fantastic scripts on it and in the end I really couldn't be prouder of it. It had its knocks and bumps along the way, much like the character himself in the book, and in the end we worked with what he had and came out the other side with something I'm really proud of."

You can pick up the complete *Fear Agent* series from Dark Horse now at your local comic book shop. To get the full story seek out volume one and two of the omnibus or if you're looking to get a taste of the series then check out the $9.99 first volume edition. I would suggest you do so as stories such as these are why the comic book medium was invented.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
by Brendon Connelly

Marvel Studios are moving with confidence but not cockiness. I've met their top-dog Kevin Feige a few times now, and those are just the characteristics he's displayed to me too. His every answer to any question has always been candid, but also built on an unshakeable trust that Marvel Studios and their collaborators will do everything in their power to deliver good value to their audiences.

Look beyond that unwavering face of conviction, however, and you might see signs that the studio is already thinking one, two, three steps ahead, preparing for a sea change that they're not about to admit to, but only they seem to be getting ready for.

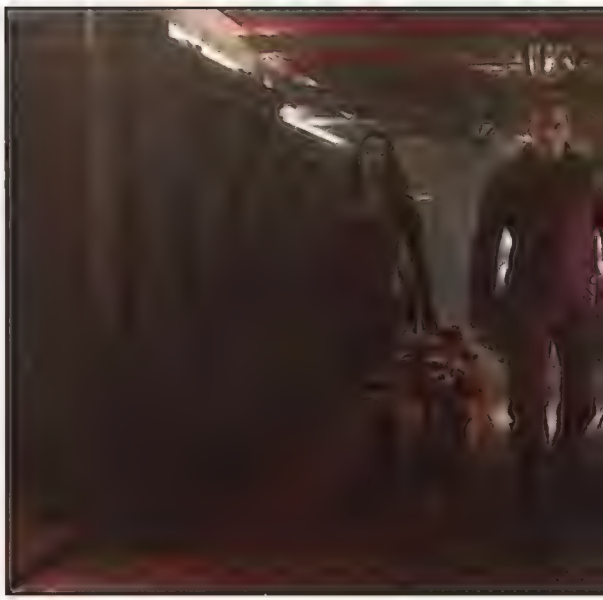
Because, right now, the costumed superhero absolutely rules the box-office, though that can't go on forever. The superhero bubble must surely be set to burst, if only temporarily, at some point down the line. And so Marvel Studios' plans go beyond the paradigm established with *Iron Man*, *Captain America*, and *Thor*, even while that model is already massively varied. The next stage of their master plan starts, I think, with this year's *Guardians of the Galaxy*. My colleagues in the press have already called this "Marvel's trickiest movie since *Iron Man*" some dozens of times over, and I know exactly where they're coming from.

There's no getting away from how unusual *Guardians* could seem to an audience conditioned to superhero norms. The broader public, expecting something that's largely in step with Marvel's already successful oeuvre, are probably going to get something of a surprise. From what we've seen - in the trailers, but also during a very revealing visit to the set, something that I look forward to telling you lots more about later - James Gunn's film looks to be, at its heart, a grand space adventure, a chase, and a caper. *Guardians* is much, much closer to something like *Star Wars* or *Firefly*, to cite the most obvious examples, than anything else that already showed up on the Marvel resume, rainbow bridges to Asgard or not.

And so this film will have a couple of hills to climb if it's going to do the best for

Marvel Studios that it can.First of all, it's going to have to charm and satisfy an audience that, outside of the hardcore at least, won't really know what to expect - and whatever they do expect, it almost certainly won't be what they're going to get. And that's even when the marketing will have tipped most punters off to the trigger happy Raccoon and talking tree.

And secondly, it's got to leave the audience's expectation of what the Marvel Studios brand promises ever-so-slightly modified, ideally somewhat boosted. Worst case scenario would be that *Guardians* turns out as the first largely disliked film in their incredible six-year run.



Neither of those proposed goals would be particularly difficult in isolation, but pulling off both at once could seem like a test when Hollywood wisdom tells us again and again that audiences like to see the familiar regurgitated in cycles.

But Marvel is confident. You can easily tell they're confident from how they've pushed ahead with *Ant Man* and *Guardians of the Galaxy* while Warner Bros. and DC Entertainment, seemingly taking far more timid steps, has only recently cast their fifth actor to play Batman on the big screen in less than twenty five years. And don't forget how they entered into a release date staring match with DC, claiming May 2016 for *Captain America* and not showing even the tiniest twinge of anxiety when *Batman and Superman* stacked up on the exact same date.

Future films that are already somewhere

in Marvel's pipeline, from a development slate that may well run into double figures, are intended to showcase *The Inhumans* and *Doctor Strange*. These characters will introduce offbeat, unexpected genre elements of their own to the mix, and twist the formula once again. Until these pictures are slotted onto the release calendar we won't know when the change is coming, but it definitely is.

Marvel movies are diversifying in a way that brands very often find rather tricky indeed. It's comparable, perhaps, to Starbucks adding a deli counter or Nike launching a line of music CDs - nothing that's alien or too off-centre to their audience, and even something the customers are very possibly going to desire, but still a significantly different product from what we'd come to expect.

Guardians is arguably a safer expansion of the Marvel brand than Doctor Strange will be because sci-fi elements have, historically, been integrated with superhero stories much more frequently than magic. Indeed, most superhero stories are a subset of "sci-fi," or certainly fit into that category more comfortably than they would, say, "fantasy." Of course, sci-fi science is often indistinguishable from magic and, the way Thor sets it up, Marvel magic is a distant, hard-to-compute science. The genres aren't entirely distinct.

But rooting things in the identifiable and relatable is always important. The opening sequence of *Guardians* plants the character of Peter Quill firmly on Planet Earth. Within minutes his life has changed forever

and he's off to space, but he's certainly established as human. Drax is a former human too, bridging the gap in many respects between Quill and the freakier members of the troop. The next would be Gamora, then Rocket Raccoon, then Groot, increasing in oddity every step of the way. But all of them are relatable, not least because of their humanoid shapes and all-important emotive eyes, but also because of their backstories, psychologies, and motivations.

Looking entirely human and having a very Earth-life administrative officiousness are the Nova Corps. and their homeworld Xandar could well be future San Francisco. In some shots, I believe, Xandar is being represented as something so mundane as London's Millennium Bridge. Like so many sci-fi adventures before it, *Guardians* is offering us familiar images with alien twists throughout. Perhaps the flashiest incarnation of this will be the space prison, The Kyln, which looks and functions much like any movie version of a high-security clink but is peopled with more, incredibly varied, and even more aggressive aliens than even the Mos Eisley Cantina.

So for a movie going public familiar with George Lucas' Galaxy far, far away - and there's even a case to say that any modern blockbuster crowd doesn't just know *Star Wars,* but have it coded into their DNA - then *Guardians* won't be too hard to grasp at all. Marvel is set to deliver a minimally pretentious, moderately campy, and maximally swashbuckling space adventure that would do Alex Raymond proud.

When *Guardians* launches in cinemas worldwide this Autumn and Marvel has another smash, I think we'll be witnessing the foundations of their next wave of experiments. The more we reward their relatively esoteric offerings, the further their ambition will extend. It's almost enough to convince me that I oughta buy five tickets and not just one.

J.C. DE LA TORRE WORKS SCIENCE-FICTION MAGIC IN *STAR MAGE*

But Knows How To Keep It Real For Readers

By Hannah Means-Shannon

J.C. De La Torre launched his first comic project, *Star Mage*, from IDW with artists Ray Dillon and Franco Cespedes, and it's a highly original blend of magical and sci-fi elements surrounding the life of young protagonist Darien Connors as he encounters a whole range of difficult choices awaiting him in a universe that is far bigger than he ever imagined. De La Torre brings these tough decisions home to readers through Darien's personal and family life, and doesn't pull any punches when it comes to exploring exactly what it takes to make a hero. De La Torre's passion for genre storytelling shines through in *Star Mage*, creating a sense of wonder for readers and immersing them in the unexpected.

Here's what this major Doctor Who Fan had to say about the past, present, and future of his new series:

YOU ARE A GENRE-SPANNING WRITER WITH ENTHUSIASM FOR SCI-FI, FANTASY, HORROR, THE OCCULT, THE WORKS. WHERE DID YOUR PASSION FOR GENRE WRITING START?

JC De La Torre: Oh, I've always loved genres. I remember as little boy writing my sequel to *Superman II* in my kitchen right after we watched the movie (I don't know if it was any good…but it had to be better than *Superman III*). I've always read genre, watched it on television, and went to movies. My mom was a big influence in that – she loved sci-fi, horror and what not – so she'd take me to R rated movies like *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *The Thing*. I saw *Alien* when I was 6 years old.

It's funny, everyone worries about what violence in movies, comics, and television does to young minds. I think I turned out okay… admittedly weird, but okay.

Anyway, I wrote through high school and college but then got shoved into the real world and lost touch with it. In 2003 I found an old file with some of the stuff I had written. It was raw but I really enjoyed reading it and I decided that I had at least one good novel in me. I'd always had a fascination with Atlantis and Greek mythology – *Ancient Rising* was born – a *Raiders of the Lost Ark* style thriller.

I continued from there, writing AR's sequel, then a collection of short stories, followed up by some e-book novellas.

YOU WRITE IN PROSE, DO PODCASTS, AND NOW ARE WRITING YOUR FIRST COMIC. WHY COMICS? WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES COMICS UNIQUE AND HOW HAS WRITING A COMIC BEEN A DIFFERENT JOURNEY FOR YOU?

JC Oh, don't forget I'm also a voice actor for *Doctor Geek's Laboratory of Applied Geekdom* and I'm currently writing an audio theater version of *Continuum Force* which I'll be starring in. Oh my gosh, that sounded egotistical didn't it? I swear I'm not…furthest thing from it, in fact.

Anyway – comics. I'm a Sci-Fi geek of the first degree and have read them my whole life. I was a Marvel mark for my childhood, especially Spider-Man but as I've grown older I've moved away from superhero comics and more darker stuff like *The Walking Dead,* 0 Barr's *The Crow, Spawn*, and some of the licensed stuff like *Doctor Who* and *Star Trek*.

I've felt my writing style lends itself to comics. I try to be very visual in my prose and it just felt like a medium in which I could really expand.

Comics are unique in that you have a finite amount of pages and panels to get your information to your reader while keeping their attention and entertaining them. It's very different in prose, where you can expound on a character's inner thoughts for an entire chapter.

In comics, it's like Maximus said in *Gladiator*, "Are you not entertained?" The minute your audience gets bored with you – they're moving on. It's lots of pressure to visualize the comic in your mind, decide what you'd be entertained with if you were reading it, then translate that vision to something the artist can use and build upon.

I love it though; I've never had so much fun creating in my life.

I HAVE TO SAY THAT THE INITIAL PAGE OF THE COMIC, SEEING A YOUNG TEEN BOY BULLIED TO THAT EXTENT KNOCKED ME BACK A LITTLE. WHAT DID YOU WANT TO CONVEY TO THE READER IN STARTING OFF THE STORY IN THAT WAY?

JC Yes, it is something isn't it? Sadly, I think bullying is reaching some obscene extremes. It's frightening and scary. However, I thought it was important to have something very traumatic bring out the special powers that Darien didn't know he had.

A little spoiler (hopefully IDW doesn't flog me), but Tristan (Darien's bully) wasn't going to leave him up there. Tristan's bad but he isn't evil. Just a big jerk.

Can you tell us a little bit about the Americana elements in this first issue? The world Darien has grown up in certainly shows the darker side of American life.

JC I love America, living in my American life but even we as Americans must admit that there are darker, violent elements to our culture that scare and confuse many of our neighbors. It wasn't truly an intentional commentary as it was just conveying how these things might happen in our schools. It's sad and tragic but it's realism that I felt needed to be explored.

I will give you a little scoop here though – you'll see that the empire of the SarruKishpu – the good guys (at least we think) – are an indirect commentary on the U.S. and how we are viewed around the world. Look for that in the later issues of series one.

Now, the construction of the first issue is quite firmly segmented in non-chronological order. How did you reach the decision to arrange the "pieces" in the way that you did to tell Darien's background and life history?

JC It was really the exposition challenge. I needed to get info to the reader that they absolutely had to have to understand what's happened to Darien in his sad life and why this change is important for him.

I tried a few different ways to approach it but it seemed more like information dumping than furthering along the storyline. I thought the flashback elements while Darien is being tortured on that flagpole were a good way to allow the reader to get the information they needed while continuing the progress of the story.

In future issues, I use dream states and a mind-melding spell to convey information quickly as well. While it does jump about a bit, I think it's worked well and not bogged down the story. Hopefully the readers will agree.

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT WORKING WITH RAY DILLON ON THIS FIRST ISSUE. WHAT SORT OF PROCESS DID YOU TWO USE FOR DETERMINING LAYOUTS, CHARACTER DESIGN, AND BACKGROUND DETAILS?

JC I was such a newb when I arrived on Ray Dillon's virtual doorstep. He showed me what he needed from a script and being a very visual writer I took to it quickly. I probably gave him too much information... but Ray was patient, asked questions when he didn't understand something and really did an amazing job at capturing my vision.

As a creator, I thought it vitally important to hire an outstanding artist. Afterall, you can write the most brilliant comic in the world but if it looks like hot garbage – no one's going to buy it. In hiring that professional, you have to be able to let go, let him/her be creative and well, provide magic.

I gave that leeway to Ray and Franco and they've been simply amazing.

I SEE THAT THERE MAY BE OTHER ARTISTS ON BOARD FOR THE SERIES? WILL THAT BE AN ISSUE-BY-ISSUE CHANGE OR WILL PARTICULAR ARTISTS BE DOING SEVERAL ISSUES?

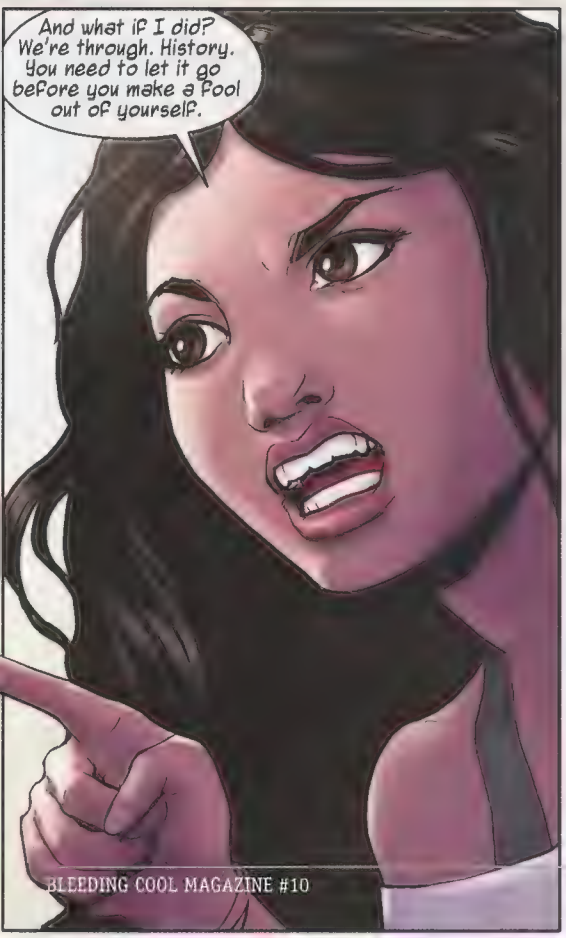
JC No, Franco Cespedes will be doing the rest of the series. Ray and I went through a long process together. It was a wild ride with family health challenges, monetary issues and there were times when we thought this thing would never get done. We got through it together, received IDW's interest and will be putting an awesome book on the shelf on April 23rd. Ray is the reason IDW even looked our way.

In the end though, our schedules simply couldn't sync up and I knew to meet what IDW wanted as a release period and to start to recoup some of the money I'd invested into the project I had to find another artist. It was very traumatic for me because the talent I was losing in Ray. He's gone on to work on *Peter Pan* and *Game of Thrones*.

But in the process of finding his

It began innocently enough...
What the hell do you think you're doing, Neek?
Tristan, don't! We're just friends.
I saw the way you were looking at him! I know that look!
BLEEDING COOL M NE #10

Darien, would you mind helping me with our Science homework after school?
I get confused with all this singularity stuff.
Uh... I'd love to. I mean... yeah, sure.
, my God, AstroNeek talking up Gemma.
Who the heck does he think he is?



replacement, I've discovered a hidden talent within me...and that's discovering outstanding artistic talent. Franco has been unbelievable. His skill, professionalism, and reliability have been second to none.

Just like Ray, we have a synergy where 95% of what I put in the script comes out just as I envisioned it or better. That other 5% Franco typically blows me away with a concept I didn't even think of.

I don't think the change should be too jarring for the reader and truth be told, while #1 is crucial to Darien's origin story – it's a must read, #2 is where you truly get introduced to the world of the SarruKishpu and Franco's use of color and background detail is awe inspiring.

There hasn't been a page I've received from him where I didn't exclaim, "Wow!"

WE HAVE SCIENCE FICTION, OF COURSE, IN *STAR MAGE*, BUT WHY, FOR YOU, IS MAGIC A CENTRAL PART OF THIS BOOK?

JC I wanted to explore a meshing of the genres. It hasn't really been done that much, with maybe the exception being *Star Wars* (and I'm sure there's others that I'm forgetting that I'll get called out on), and I'll be honest, there's always going to be some kind of mystical or mythological thing in my writing.

Not every race in the SarruKishpu's empire is at the same level of Kishpu (magic), so many have to compensate for their deficiencies with science.

While the Eriduians are powerful enough to conjure spaceships, force shields, and weapons with just their kishpu, other races have to build their ships and what not mechanically. It's created a class system in their culture (similar to that of India) where the more powerful Mages are higher "scepters;" they are the rulers of the kingdom. The lower magical races become your worker bees or warriors.

NOW FOR A BIG QUESTION: TELL US WHAT YOU CAN ALLOW YOURSELF TO TELL US ABOUT THE LONG-TERM GOALS AND CONCEPTS IN THE BOOK.

JC Please allow my inner Whovian to channel River Song and say, "Spoilers, sweetie." This series is really Darien's self discovery of who he truly is and what he means to the cause. It's going to be difficult for him. He'll face some obstacles that are impossible to imagine in defense of an empire he knows nothing about.

Everything rides on him choosing a side. But which will he choose?

As for the future, I have a second series mapped out in my head that will feature new enemies, a little time travel, and a different track for Darien and his friends.

EXACTLY HOW BIG A DOCTOR WHO FAN ARE YOU AND DOES THAT INFLUENCE *STAR MAGE*?

JC Well, let me put it this way – we have a full-size TARDIS taking up a significant part of our living room. The wife and I do Whocosplay at cons, we've watched every single Doctor (although not every single episode of every single Doctor – we're working on the classic stuff), and we've watched every episode of what I call "Nu Who" a billion times. We receive *Doctor Who Magazine,* our podcast *Transmissions From Atlantis* has a dedicated weekly segment to Doctor Who, I read the comics, listen to the big finish audios, and own the blu-ray box set with the awesome 11th doctor sonic TV remote.

We want a Dalek... and we will get one someday. So I'd say when it comes to the Madman in the blue box – we're a bit fanatical.

I was so disappointed when IDW didn't continue to do *Doctor Who* comics because they did it brilliantly and because I hope to convince them to let me write for *Doctor Who.*

Alas, it was not meant to be...unless Titan calls. I'm waiting, Titan!

As for elements of Doctor Who in *Star Mage*? Spoilers... but there might be one or two things Whovians may see similarities in.

UNCOVER THE TRUTH OF DARTH MAUL'S RETURN.
STAR WARS
DARTH MAUL
SON OF DATHOMIR
BASED ON UNAIRED EPISODES OF THE CLONE WARS TELEVISION SERIES,
adapted by Jeremy Barlow, with art by Juan Frigeri. Covers by Chris Scalf!
DARK HORSE COMICS
DarkHorse.com
LUCAS BOOKS
StarWars.com
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL COMICS SHOP. To find a comics shop in your area, call 1-888-266-4226. For more information or to order direct visit DarkHorse.com or call 1-800-862-0052.
© 2014 Lucasfilm Ltd. & ™. All rights reserved. Used under authorization. Text and illustrations for Darth Maul—Son of Dathomir © 2014 Lucasfilm Ltd. Dark Horse Comics® and the Dark Horse logo are trademarks of Dark Horse Comics, Inc., registered in various categories and countries. All rights reserved.

ROBOCOP REDUX

Joshua Williamson Talks Cop Shop

By James Kuhoric

Everything old is new again, or so the saying goes. Certainly moviegoers live by that mantra as the sequel and the remake continue to be slotted with major releases year in and year out. This past February one of the most venerated genre movies of all time got a makeover as the new *RoboCop* feature gave 1987's groundbreaking film a facelift and a modern look but, was it really "RoboCop?" The thing about remakes is while they often bring something new to the endeavor, they rarely are able to capture what made the original film special. This holds true for virtually all remakes. The best you can really hope for is that the new film will stand on its own as something entertaining.

But that isn't the case in comics. In this medium we can go back to the original and not only revisit the elements of the classic that made is special but we can continue it with direct prequels and sequels that are meant to be true to the source material. That to me is the magic of licensed comics. Finding the right creative team that reveres the source material and does everything they can to give you more of what you loved about the movie or television program. And the folks at BOOM! are no strangers to it with some incredible licensed work leading the way – the exemplary

Planet of the Apes and *Hellraiser* comics are must read books for fans of the franchises. And now following up on successful remake movie tie ins for *RoboCop*, they are taking us back to Peter Weller and Paul Verhoeven's seminal work, the original film for a new comic book series picking up right after the events chronicled on screen.

Bleeding Cool Magazine had an opportunity to talk with Joshua Williamson as he explains why his vision for RoboCop will deliver the goods, even if he doesn't work directly for Dick Jones.

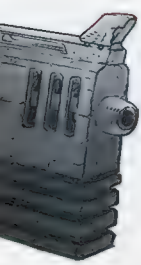
ROBOCOP IS A CLASSIC SCI-FI FRANCHISE. WHEN DID YOU FIRST FIND LOVE FOR IT?

Williamson: On VHS at a sleepover when I was probably too young to be watching movies that violent. But of course I loved it. Half Man, Half Machine, all COP?! C'mon! That's got awesome written all over it. Especially for a young kid. He's a robot, for god sakes!

The action, the violence, it's all just amazing.

And I loved the news reports and commercials, but it wasn't until I was a bit older that I truly got the satire of the whole thing. Which then just increased my love of RoboCop.

HOW DID YOU WIND UP WORKING ON A NEW *ROBOCOP* COMIC SERIES WITH BOOM! STUDIOS?

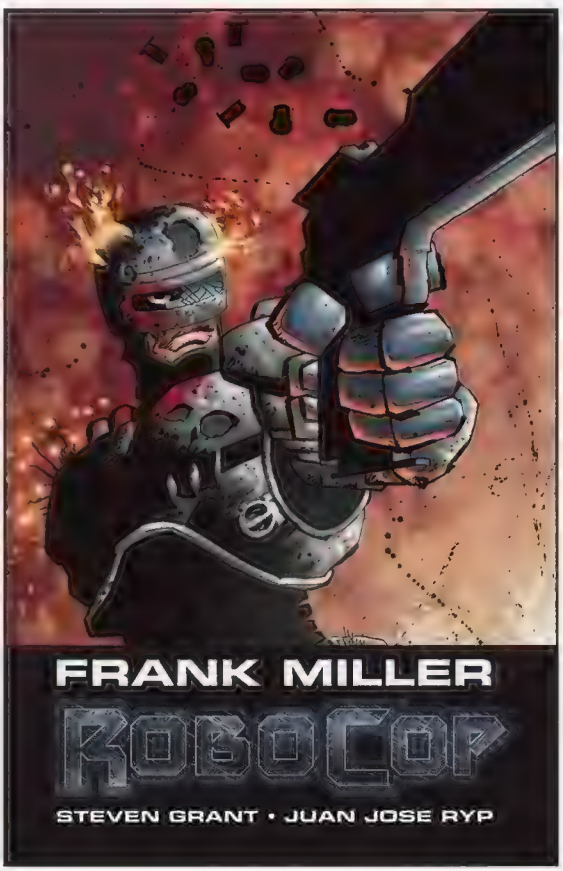


JW Back at the end of 2013, [BOOM! Studios Managing Editor] Bryce Carlson asked me if I wanted to work on some of the new *RoboCop* movie tie-ins. I considered it, even saying yes for a moment, but realized with my schedule at the time, I just didn't have the time, so I had to back out.

But a few months later, Bryce asked me again, this time for the actual series. But not with the new movie, instead it was

Classic *RoboCop*.

From there I had one request. It needed to be a hard "R"-rated comic. Just like the movie.



What was the biggest draw for you to work on a series like *RoboCop*?

JW It's always fun to work on characters from your youth. With this series I get a chance to do some sci-fi with a crime edge. There was always something raw and dirty to the world of RoboCop, especially that first movie. It seemed like none of the future technology really worked, and that the future was a much harsher mix than I was used to. With that I knew I could tell a very gritty crime story where the only piece of real sci-fi was RoboCop.

Also, it was an opportunity to work with BOOM! which was something I had wanted to do for years.

Where does this new *RoboCop* series take place in the continuity of the franchise, if at all?

JW It takes place after the first movie. I'm going to shoot straight with you here... I'm ignoring everything except the first movie. No comics, cartoons, or sequels. Just the first move and that's it.

Where did you get your inspiration for the RoboCop story you're writing? Comics, films, etc.?

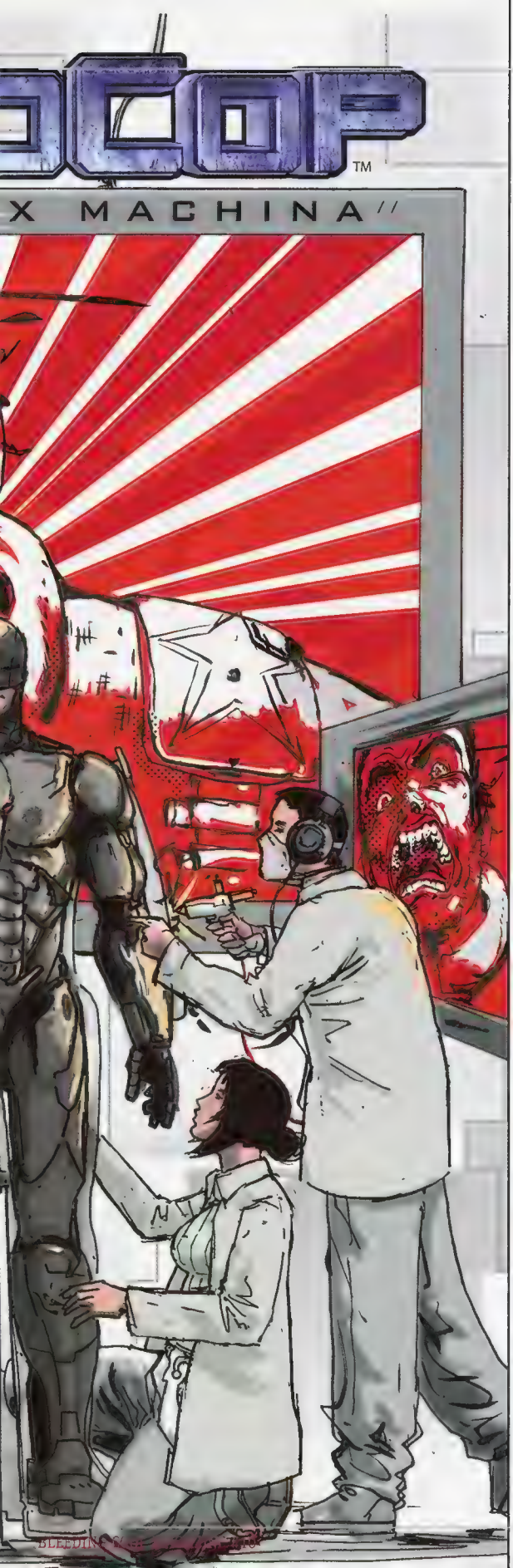
JW That first film by Paul Verhoeven was all I needed. It's a film I rewatch about once a year, so as soon as I sat down and started to write out ideas, I knew where I was going.

But first I created our bad guy "Killian" and his motivations. The story started to ripple away from there.

What are you most excited to explore in this ongoing series?

JW The crime aspect and the police station politics of Detroit. In the first film, we saw just glimpses of both as the focus was mostly on RoboCop and OCP.

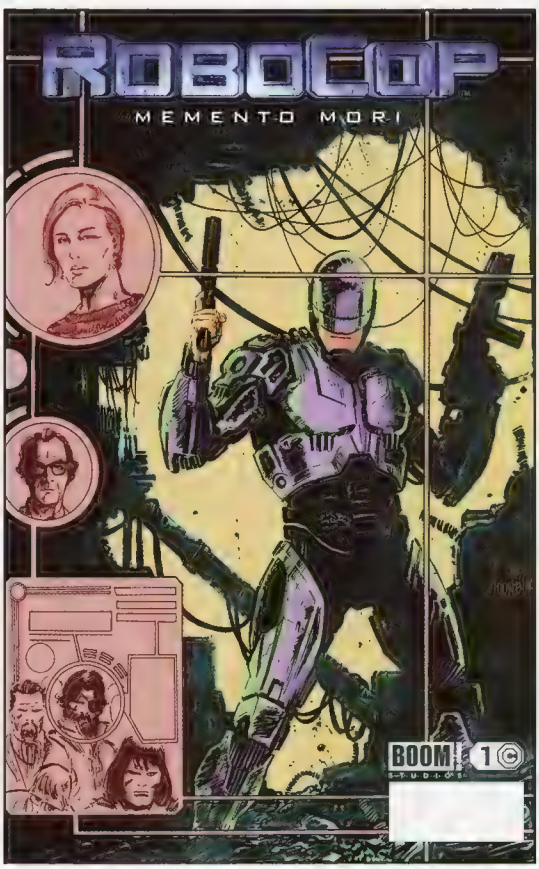
And there is a sad truth to Murphy



as RoboCop. He'll never be anything other than RoboCop. Yes, he lost his family and his life. And then in the film he regained his humanity, but it seemed like it never really got into the idea that Murphy will never advance in life past being RoboCop. That's it. Trapped in a metal body and that role.

We know that Ann Lewis has a big part in this series and really steps up. Is there anything you'd like to say about her character?

JW Lewis is an interesting character that is really barely in that first movie. Her personality is explained pretty quickly as a spunky young bad-ass cop who doesn't take anyone's shit. But her experience with RoboCop matured her and she's starting to grow up. She wants to go beyond being a street cop, but she doesn't want to leave RoboCop behind.



What can you tell us about the new villain, Killian?

JW Killian was a gun runner and dealer in Detroit about 20 years ago. He went to jail, did his time and is now a free man. No parole. Just out. Before he went in, Killian had a bit of a history with OCP, and sees RoboCop as a representation of that.

Killian can be a very charismatic and smart individual who loves weapons and violence and sees RoboCop as a fun opportunity for both.

Killian was created early on and there is a line that he has on the first page that became the catalyst for the whole series.

What tone will the series be taking? In the many years of RoboCop, we've seen it go in a more sci-fi direction with the Marvel run, and more fantasy with *RoboCop: Last Stand*. Where do you plan to take readers in this ongoing series?

JW Crime. Gross, gritty, dirty, dark CRIME!

My plan is to focus more on the criminal underworld and to make it so the only sci-fi thing in the entire book is RoboCop. He's unique in that the rest of the city around him is this cruel and unforgiving environment that is very grounded in reality, and yet he is a piece of insane future technology.

The rest is all drugs, guns, blood, and blowing shit up.

What's it like working with artist Carlos Magno? What are you excited to see him bring to life?

JW Carlos has been amazing. I've liked his work before on *Deathmatch* and *Planet of the Apes*, but with *RoboCop*, he has really leveled up.

Early on I stated that if I were to do this project, I needed to have open communication with Carlos. To be able to share ideas with him. And Carlos has had some great ideas. He really gets the script and the world, and has created some pages that will blow people's minds.

And really with Carlos, the stuff I'm most excited about is some of the crazy fight scenes and action sequences we have coming up. It's going to be nuts!

As a fan of RoboCop I'm really excited to see where this series goes. The dedication to the principles of the first film, a focus on the development of the mental state of Alex Murphy, the return to the crime riddled uber violent streets of Detroit, and an incredible artist whose work on *Planet of the Apes* redefined the series in comics? I don't know about you, but I'd buy that for a dollar. Well...four dollars with inflation, but you get the point.

JUST
WHAT THE
DOCTOR
ORDERED
By Joshua Kopin

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

By Joshua Kopin

What Valiant Entertainment did in 2012 is probably unique, not only in the history of comics, but possibly all of pop culture. After more than a decade without any new material, without any material at all save the occasional reprint collection, the company brought its properties back to life. Similar things have happened in recent years, Brandon Graham taking up Rob Liefeld's *Prophet*, for example, and transforming it, or the reemergence of *Creepy* and *Eerie* at Dark Horse, or the various attempts, between DC Comics and Archie Comics, at making the old Red Circle superheroes relevant intellectual properties again, but none of these quite match up to the through and through resurrection of both content and publisher at Valiant.

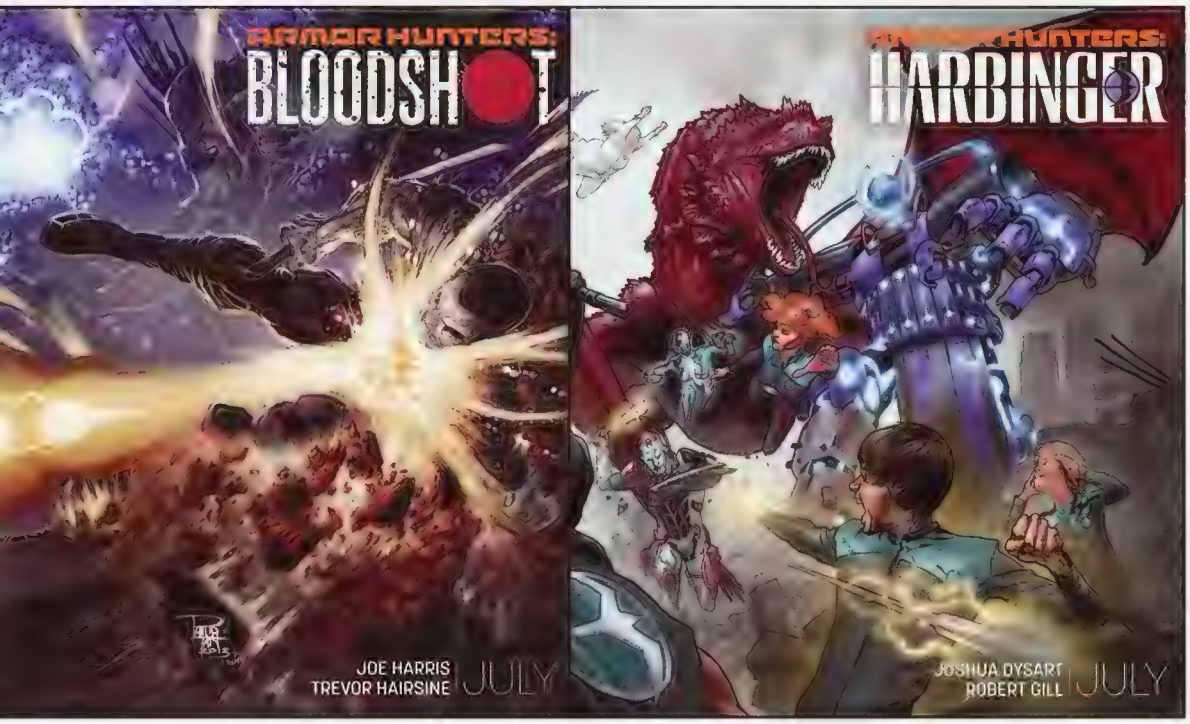
Declaring their first summer "The Summer of Valiant," the publisher began with a slate of four titles, *Archer and Armstrong*, *Bloodshot*, *Harbinger*, and *X-O Manowar*. Assigning writing duties to known quantities like Fred Van Lente, Joshua Dysart, Duane Swierczynski, Robert Venditti, and picking artists with clear and comprehensible styles to illustrate the books, the initial offerings appealed both to old fans of the characters, who perhaps had more money to spend than they did in the nineties, and to new fans looking for a familiar name working on something exciting. In genre, the titles ranged from straight up action to sci-fi to humorous action adventure, sometimes straddling two or more. Associate Editor Alejandro Arbona suggests that this wide appeal is one of the publisher's strengths: "it's tricky to integrate it all as a coherent universe. But also a lot of fun. Too much of the same gets really boring, and as an editor, I love being able to work on comedy in *Quantum and Woody* over here, horror in *Shadowman* over there, gun-toting super-action/adventure in *Bloodshot and HARD Corps* over there…when it comes to the challenge of how all these characters live and exist in the same world, well…it's a big world. The real world is a big world. I like to think that by mixing it up across our line, we tap into a very real feeling of how broad and

diverse all our lives and experiences are. "

The time since the initial launch has seen the reintroduction of books like *Eternal Warrior, Shadowman, Quantum and Woody*, and the Avengers-style team-up book *Unity* to the Valiant line, and the addition of James Asmus and the very in-demand and very talented Matt Kindt to its stable of writers. The publisher has also put together a second Summer of Valiant, changed the title of *Bloodshot* to *Bloodshot and H.A.R.D Corps,* and managed a few crossovers, including an event comic called *Harbinger Wars*.

In a very short span, then, the company went from being the industry equivalent of Frankenstein's monster to being a major producer of American comic books, in both the best ways and maybe also in the more self-indulgent ones. Just two years in, and they've already proven everything they need to prove. That doesn't mean they're going to slow down or rest on their success, though. This summer, in fact, they're speeding up. Rather than declaring a third Summer of Valiant, the publisher has put together something new, something a little more extensive, something they're calling the Valiant First initiative. The initiative is this: starting just before Free Comic Book Day and continuing through September, Valiant will be launching one new title a month. The purpose of this plan seems to be twofold; first, with these six new books, they're seeking to bolster their readership by attracting new fans with easy places to enter into the ongoing story they've been putting together since the relaunch. Second, they're looking to ensure that the fans that they've already attracted, by putting together quality comics in multiple genres, stay put. Even though they're expanding, Valiant Executive Editor Warren Simons has noted that they're committed to keeping quality high by limiting the total number of books they're putting out to nine core titles.

The first of these new books, *Rai*, arrives in April. Written by Kindt and with painted art by Clayton Crain, the title is set in the far future, and features the guardian of that era's Japan, now orbiting Earth, taking orders from an intelligence called Father as he attempts to protect that society's long peace. After that first big push, Valiant First moves into setting up the company's



second massive multibook crossover, *Armor Hunters*. Published in June, and written by Venditti with art by Doug Braithwaite, the event book spins out of *X-O Manowar*, and kicks off when a group of aliens tasked with destroying the titular character's armor, and other armors like it, find their target on earth. The crossover, which will eventually be 18 issues total, then explodes, with the story continuing in both *Unity* (which features X-O Manowar alongside other Valiant heroes) and the regular *X-O Manowar* series. In July, the event will be rounded out with spinoffs *Armor Hunters: Bloodshot* and *Armor Hunters: Harbinger.*

These books, already appealing to those with a sense of nostalgia, will be further interesting to fans of the nineties because a certain, and limited, number of editions will be printed with chromium covers. The publisher, which is proud of the fact that it introduced the chromium cover to the industry, says that it's bringing the covers back because fans kept asking about them. Whether you want them, or want to avoid them, the covers are kicking up conversation about both the crossover and the wider universe that the publisher is building across the line.

After *Armor Hunters* kicks off, Valiant First will continue to chug along with the release of *The Delinquents* in August. That series, co-written by Fred Van Lente and James Asmus and drawn by Kano, will put Valiant's two action comedy teams, *Archer and Armstrong* and *Quantum and Woody*, and the creators behind them, together, for what it, apologetically and only half-joking, describes as "the world's worst team-up. "Finally, the new publishing slate will conclude in September, with the release of a revived old Valiant favorite, Dr. Mirage, written by Jen Van Meter and drawn by Roberto De La Torre.

Like the rest of the Valiant line, Dr. Mirage has its origins in a series from the early 1990s. That series, called *The Second Life of Dr. Mirage*, featured a married pair of what might be called paranormal investigators, Hwen and Carmen Mirage, whose life together is complicated when Hwen becomes entangled in a fight with a necromancer and becomes something like a ghost. Noncorporeal, he and Carmen aren't able to have physical contact, and the series' conflict arose from the way their relationship plays out given that constraint, alongside more typical superheroics. The original series, written by Bob Layton, a writer and artist usually associated with Iron Man, and drawn by Bernard Chang, ran for 18 issues, and ended not long after Valiant was purchased by video game maker Acclaim.

Van Meter thinks that fans of the first series are going to be fond of this one, as well: "We're all working to make this series capture some of the feel of the original; readers of Layton and Chang's books really responded, I think, to the charming dynamic between Dr. Mirage and Carmen, and I want to play with that as much as I can. With this new iteration I can't go exactly where that

series did, nor should I – ours stands on its own in that sense – but I'd like to play to the spirit if not the letter of what made that original material so much fun."

The comic has had an unusual afterlife; since the last issue of the original series, it has seen collections issued in translation all over the world. Now, after almost two decades, the Mirages are back for a different kind of second life, although, this time, the series is called *The Death-Defying Doctor Mirage*. The changes, though, are perhaps even more significant than that; although the characters remain similar, the focus of the new series is on the duo's female half, now known as Shan, making Dr. Mirage the first of Valiant's titles to have a woman lead. Alejandro Arbona differentiates between Dr. Mirage and characters like Kris, Faith, and Livewire, who figure into *Unity* and *Harbinger*: "this will be the first time we meet a solo female hero with only herself to depend upon. And that will play an intrinsic part in Mirage's story."

Van Meter, for her part, plays up the whole of Shan's character, rather than just that one aspect, saying that, as a writer, she is approaching this story as she does all of her others "I want the story to be interesting and engaging, to have heart and integrity. To do that, the characters need to be complex people with compelling goals and needs and motivations. The gender identity of the character at the center will be crucial to that character's experience, as will her ethnic background, education, ability to see ghosts whether she wants to or not, and on and on.

In this iteration, Hwen, who shares the title of Dr. Mirage with Shan, has passed away in a tragic accident. The initial story will have to do with how Shan crosses the Deadside, a location that ties the series into Shadowman, where the new doctor made her first appearance, to find him. Arbona calls the series "a modern-day Orpheus, " and notes that the series will expose readers to a "a larger Valiant Universe than we've ever seen before...a world of ghosts and magic, of ordinary human beings with the souls of monsters, and of powerful creatures from other dimensions with the pettiness and jealousies of everyday people. "

The Death-Defying Doctor Mirage is an instructive example of what makes Valiant so exciting. With its lean publishing slate and its dual dedication to both the expansion of its line and maintaining the quality of the books it's already putting out, the company consistently publishes comics worth taking down off of the shelf. Perhaps more importantly, the editors, writers and artists behind the books have shown a willingness to try new things even as both the properties and the retailing harken back to the comics of twenty years ago. If mainstream superhero comics are all about constant reinvention, Valiant, in its own short second life, has proven to be masterful at the craft.

REMODELING MALEFICENT
By Brendon Connelly

Disney has been finding ways to make big, blockbuster entertainment out of fairy tales for decades now, ever since *Snow White* changed everything for family cinema in 1937. Most recently, they've been revising the stories they once immortalised in animation with new, live action renditions. In the case of *Maleficent*, the two versions are intimately entwined, with the new movie centered on a character that was originally created specifically for the cartoon incarnation.

But taking Maleficent, who was the ice-cold villainess of the original, and making her the protagonist of her own Hollywood-ready, all ages-friendly major motion picture just can't have been easy. The Big Studio way is to avoid unsympathetic characters at almost any cost, and besides her fashion-magazine looks, Maleficent isn't the typical leading lady at all.

We visited the movie's set during the shoot and spoke to both Angelina Jolie and screenwriter Linda Woolverton about their parts in recreating Maleficent for a new audience and from a new vantage point. It was obvious that each of them was taking their work here very seriously, and approaching their duties with great care. They certainly impressed us with the diligence and intelligence of their considerations.

Alice in Wonderland and *Beauty and the Beast*'s Woolverton explained that she was initially approached for this project by the Disney brass and not the other way around. Direct sequels or remakes aside, it's relatively unusual for a film to start inside the heart of a studio and not arrive as a pitch or a screenplay. So why did Disney decide that they wanted this movie in the first place? "She is apparently the most beloved in Disney's pantheon of villains," Woolverton told us, "I did not know that."

And so there was some need to tread carefully. If Maleficent was already popular, then there must be a reason for this, and betraying that appeal would run the risk of alienating existing fans. "Angelina was more concerned than I that the character really is the Maleficent from *Sleeping Beauty*," Woolverton admitted. "She really wanted to deliver that, embody the character, and she kept pulling hard for that."

"She was perfect as she was, so we're trying to be respectful and to give everybody what they loved from all those years ago,"

added Jolie. "We try our best that, whenever we weren't sure about certain things, whether it's her look or anything about her voice, we go back to the original. The christening especially, we tried to do in the original way."

Nonetheless, the change in perspective necessitated new scenes with a new point of view and so the film shows Maleficent in a new light. Woolverton explained the origin story she created for the character, the better to establish some sympathy for her, until now at least, rather unsympathetic actions. "I started her out as a tree fairy in the moors. She's an innocent tree fairy who has her own skill, she can repair broken branches and she looks after a grove in the moors. She's not a cute fairy. She's larger than the other fairies and she just doesn't fit in with the court fairies, the aristocracy of the fairy world."

That's bad enough, but it got even worse for the poor girl as Woolverton made Maleficent a tragically bereaved orphan. "Her mother died in childbirth," she explained, "Her mother was the queen's sister and so the queen blamed Maleficent, making her a bit of an outcast. "More than a bit, really. Jolie also gave us her account of the young Maleficent's tragic beginnings. "When we meet her, she's growing up in a tree by herself," she told us, "She didn't have a mother so she doesn't understand the love of a mother or, as a result, understand children. What I like is that she's an awkward person, an awkward orphaned little girl who doesn't really fit in and I think a lot of children will identify with that." Not the happiest of childhoods? "She deals with a certain amount of abuse in her life but is unable to handle it well... she goes quite dark."

There's a clear chain of character cause and effect here. It's obviously quite a neat arrangement, though Woolverton resisted the idea that her screenplay is trying to teach the viewer a lesson. This is one of the key distinctions, she argued, between the way a fairy tale would do it and the approach she has taken for the screenplay. "Fairy tales were created to teach, to tell a moral," she told us. And the way she does it? "I try to make the themes as relevant to today as I can, so that when you're watching, you'll hopefully see yourself in the characters and hopefully in the protagonist. The relationships should feel more modern. The reason I like relationships like that is because I believe them. The theme is about love, the

redemptive power of love, how it can transfer anything, even the hardest of hearts, but I leave the word moral out of it."

So Woolverton's ambitions aren't to use Maleficent as a moral example, necessarily, but to delve deep inside her psychology. And she's also concerned, as much as anything else, that her character is able to sustain the film's drama. "I really like to know why the characters are the way they are," she said, "Why they make their choices. It was important for me to understand the 'Why?' of all of this. She's still a villain, she still does villainous things, but she's now the one who drives the story forward and so we have to understand her and have some feeling of kinship for her."

Jolie certainly believed in a relatable Maleficent, expressing that well-trusted actor's desire to see things from the character's perspective and find what justification they can. "There's always a part of her that's struggling for what she thinks is fair" she told us, "Fighting for what she thinks is right. And she's not a fighter or a warrior just because, she has a real sense of belief." Because the film expands Maleficent's storyline significantly, it allowed the filmmakers to save her classic look for dramatic effect. Jolie told us about the costume she wears through much of the running time. "Most of this film I'm in capes and kaftans that are very cozy and I just spend a little bit of it dressed up like this." It must be fun to

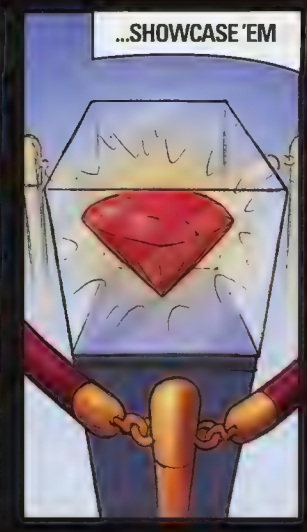
get to play the definitive, iconic version, though? "I like all the flying stunts and all the dressing up... It was important to me that she didn't look normal. After having this makeup for so long, I now feel that my normal face is very flat, looks very dull. This is much more fun. The little kid in me has been allowed to come out."

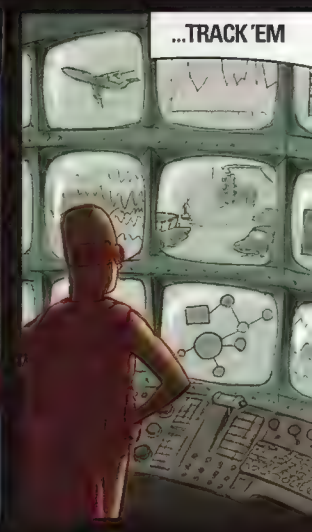
If everything works, and Woolverton and Jolie have certainly spent an incredible amount of efforts in trying to ensure that it will, *Maleficent* will make an excellent accompaniment to *Sleeping Beauty*. Ideally, it will appeal to both young and old audiences too. "I don't want to make a movie that adults will be bored in," Woolverton said, "I want to make a movie that everybody is interested in. That's just better storytelling."

Jolie too was looking to entertain audiences across the board, particularly coming to this film directly from her adult-oriented directorial debut, *In the Land of Blood and Honey*. "I felt like I had to go to completely the other extreme, to remember what it's like to be an actor, to be trying to make people smile, to make them laugh, to perform for an audience. This got me out of my head and back into that kind of performance."

On set it was hard to see the whole picture, but Jolie definitely looks the part. If Robert Stromberg and his crew can make a film that's one half as cool, elegant, and striking as Jolie's dark fairy then *Maleficent* should be a feast for the senses at least.

To build the best collection...





GET CGC'd

CGC's professional certification gives you all the tools you need to build a complete, world-class collection. Our distinctive holder and label are the symbol of precise and accurate grading and state-of-the-art protection.

Unique online resources allow you to interact with collectors throughout the hobby. You can showcase your sets in the CGC Comics Registry and compete for Registry awards. And you can track the rarity of all CGC-certified comics in the CGC Census Report, the most important comic book population database there is.

To learn more, visit
www.CGCcomics.com/build

CGC
When a Comic Book becomes a Treasure

P.O. Box 4738 | Sarasota, Florida 34230 | 1-877-NM-COMIC (662-6642) | www.CGCcomics.com

An Independent Member of the Certified Collectibles Group

SCI-FI: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

By Rich Johnston

Science fiction is never about the future or about other planets. Not when it's good science-fiction, anyway. It's about us, here and now, on this planet, how we live our lives in the now. And it was always thus.

Take Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. A man travelling from strange land to strange land, each populated with strange peoples. But all of them, from the sentient ruling horses, the Whinyems, and the humans that they treated like animals, to the Lilliputians at war over which way to best drop an egg, were searing indictments on the way people live then, and live now. The way we see life, and believe in exceptionalism for those who are like us, or find reasons to fight of that which can't be proved one way or another, specifically religion. Have things really changed that much?

The very format was taken up by Douglas Adams for *Hitch-Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy*. Instead of Gulliver, we had Arthur Dent, his planet destroyed, as was his house, down to overenthusiastic bureaucracy. The universe also mirrors the extremes of our own world - the President having to remove part of his brain to get elected or artificial intelligence that's so advanced it gets very very depressed and fails to provide any kind of service.

And the granddaddy of them all, *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley wasn't so much about creating a new form of life, as examining our own life and trying to get an idea on what made it, what makes us tick, as much a psychological exercise in self-awareness than a gothic horror.

So. What does the science-fiction in comics say about us, in the here and now?

The concept of the superhero is, as has been said many a time, about wish fulfilment, and the power fantasy of those without power. So the child being bullied can read a story about a god on earth with a secret identity, hiding their power from the world, and can fantasise that this is

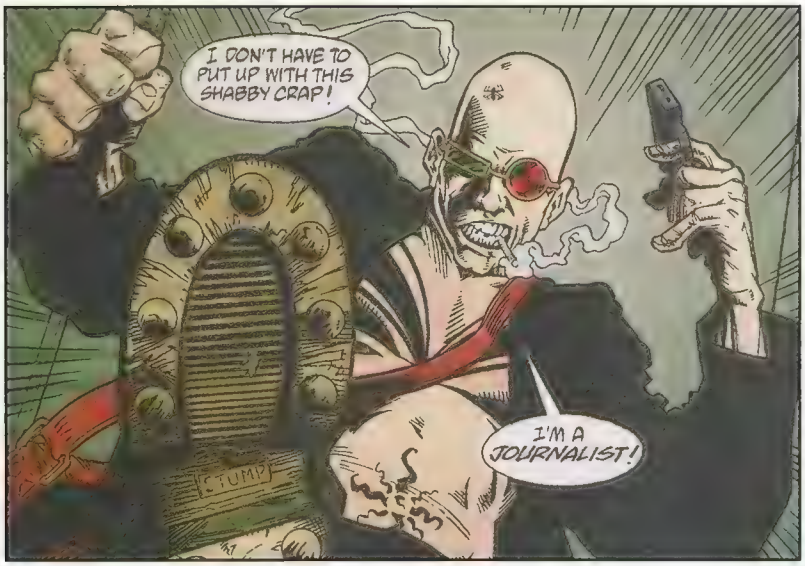
their own reality as well. They can't reveal their superhero identity to the father who beats them, the bullies who kick them, or the teacher who puts them down. But if only they knew, that behind Billy Craddock's broken spectacles lays a power house that could atomise them all with one punch.

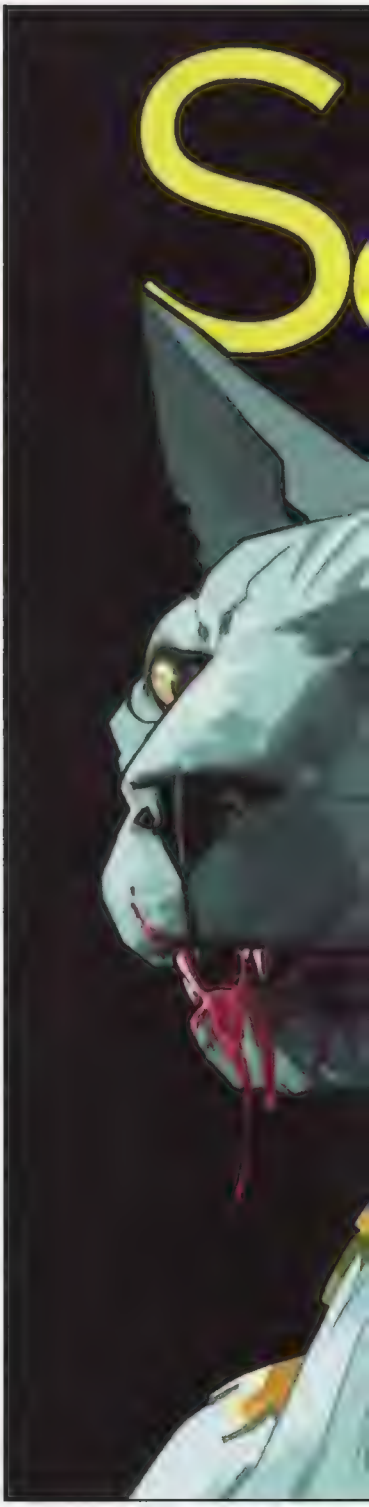
However, it can get more complex than that. *Superman* adds the layer of the immigrant, one who could feel powerless in the new land they have found themselves in. *Wonder Woman* merges the power fantasy with that of wanting to be a princess, but still being kick ass. *Batman* is who you could be... if you didn't have your parents. And were a genius detective, master combat artist, and world class inventor. Hmm. We'll get back to that.

But if superheroes focused on that adolescent fantasy of gaining powers without actually having to work with it (those lucky mutants they were born with it) it's also possibly for the superhero to address other power fantasies. Recent issues of *Iron Man* has seen the Mandarin Rings find those with different power fantasies, such as Red Peril's desire to recreate the capitalist structure, one she feels oppressed by. Recently Motormouth returned to Marvel, now a single mother trapped in the humdrum grind of life. And finally having something to scream about. And both Ms Marvel and Nova concentrating on your young adolescent again, but giving their lives very different background to find different ways to talk about power.

But what other kind of power is there? Dan Dare saw the fading power of the British Empire, replaced by the British desire to conquer space instead, especially those dratted Treens and their enigmatic bald leader the Mekon. Was he that far from Gandhi, if in looks rather than action?

Transmetropolitan by Warren Ellis and Darick Robertson was a classic in-the-future





sci-fi story concentrating on the career path of journalism. And apparently it still has a future. But rather than looking at how journalism survives an internet that demands everything for free, it looked at the journalism that was then, and exaggerated the context. Some had the fight of the spiky against the bland, the voice against the political tropes, and the truth that powerful people do terrible things if they don't think people are watching. Or if people are watching but just don't care enough to stop them. Sound familiar? Although I understand that tech folk have a ready-to-roll bowel disruptor gun. That's the thing, Warren Ellis did delve into New Scientist when writing the comic.

Sometimes science fiction can get lucky – if lucky is the word. After original publication, the world itself changes to suddenly make the problems being pointed out initially far more apparent. *V For Vendetta* is an excellent example, writing philosophically that there are only two courses available for society and the people that make it up, either Anarchy or Fascism. With CCTV cameras everywhere and a police state controlling the flow of information, it was pretty clear which side the author favoured. But many of these examples were grabbed by the Wachowski brothers and completely reinvented for their movie version, now addressing a post 9-11 society and the excesses of the system. And a whole new audience for the original version, in the new reality.

Starship Troopers has a similar journey, a fifties sci-fi novel by Robert Heinlein that sold the idea of personal responsibility to the state, and the merit of a military run system when expanding the boundaries of civilisation. Written in a Cold War time, it was less about humanity versus space bugs, instead it was a vindication of the US Military and became recommended reading to new soldiers. It was transformed by Paul Verhoeven into a searing critique of that kind of thinking in movie form, with

a military systems sending young beautiful mindless things to the slaughter, and exposing both the propaganda of dehumanising the enemy and proposing a moral equivalence between the US and its enemies. The look and feel was very much based on the Desert Storm offensive, married with the SS, but it would take the events of 9/11 and the subsequent Afghanistan and Iraq wars for the film to be seen by some as a work of prophesy. It wasn't, it was a film that just talked about what happens with people and why. And with lots of explosions.

The thematic precursor to *Starship Troopers* though was *RoboCop*. And the themes in that film were thoroughly based on the Judge Dredd strip in *2000AD*, a police-of-the-future series that has been running weekly for almost four decades in real time. This comic creates ridiculous problems to be dealt with, large and small, but it's all based on the attitude of British police in the seventies and the eighties where they were The Law, their word was never questioned and they were often utterly corrupt. Recent interpretations have taken in a change in policing, an attempt to understand rather than judge, but often that's just skin deep, or bound up in over the top bureaucracy.

Right now, the biggest sci-fi hit in comics is *Saga*. But amid the planetary complexity, royal machinations, journalists, bounty hunters, and felines that detect those who are economical with the actualite, it's telling the *Romeo and Juliet* tale again, or at least a "what happened next" take. And the everyday story of people who are different to each other getting married and finding ways to deal with the conflicts.

Most space opera sci-fi was an excuse to retell stories from the Wild West, the same macho attitudes, an uncompromising enemy

defined by their strange cultures and differing skin colour (let's call them Native Aliens shall we?) even if they are strangely drawn to our women. *Star Trek* is probably the best known of this trope on the small screen. But it took *Firefly* and *Serenity* to take these tropes and try and treat them literally, with music, accents, shanty-towns, and an abundance of horses, all set after a civil war. Not about the future, less about the present, more about the past.

So *Y The Last Man* is not so much about a world without men as it is about how people treat women today and have different expectations of women than from men. *Think Tank* and *Manhattan Projects* are about the cult of personality in science and the value science has in today's culture, rather than the specific creations of those scientists. *Fantastic Four* is what a man will do to keep his family together, given extraordinary changes in their circumstances. *X-Men* is about how a minority reacts to oppression in a wider society, when suddenly discovering or being given new powers.

If all you see is the laser guns, the space ships, the time travel, the planets, or the new technology, then there's so much more just waiting for you to discover. To boldly go where, well, plenty of folk have gone before...

MP
THE MANHATTAN PROJECTS
HICKMAN • PITARRA
What if the research and development department created to produce the first atomic bomb was a front for a series of other, more unusual, programs? What if the union of a generation's brightest minds was not a signal for optimism, but foreboding? What if everything... went wrong?
01

A *STAR TREK* EVENT NEARLY 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING!

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, A VISUAL PRESENTATION OF THE MUCH-DISCUSSED, UNREVISED, UNADULTERATED VERSION OF **HARLAN ELLISON'S** AWARD-WINNING *STAR TREK* TELEPLAY SCRIPT, *THE CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER!* THIS HUGO- AND WRITER'S GUILD OF AMERICA AWARD-WINNING TELEPLAY HAS BEEN MUCH DISCUSSED FOR DECADES BUT ONLY HERE CAN YOU SEE THE STORY AS MR. ELLISON ORIGINALLY INTENDED!

STAR TREK
HARLAN ELLISON'S
THE CITY on the EDGE of FOREVER
THE ORIGINAL TELEPLAY
JUNE 2014

WRITTEN BY HARLAN ELLISON, SCOTT TIPTON & DAVID TIPTON
ART BY J.K. WOODWARD | COVERS BY JUAN ORTIZ

IDW
WWW.IDWPUBLISHING.COM

Full Color • 32 pages • $3.99

Star Trek™, ®, and © 2014 CBS Studios, Inc. All Rights Reserved. STAR TREK and related marks are trademarks of CBS Studios, Inc. IDW publishing authorized user.

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *World War Z* and *Zombie Survival Guide*, **MAX BROOKS**, comes an epic tale of three species in mortal conflict, illustrated by **RAULO CACERES**.

THE EXTINCTION PARADE™

THIS IS HOW A SPECIES DIES

VOLUME ONE

COLLECTS ISSUES #1-5

COMING JULY 2014

AVATAR™

35 YEARS OF ALIEN

By Jeff Spry

Can no one really hear you scream in space? Scientists will tell you it's true and reveal impressive facts and theorems to support the claim. However, if you happened to be a long-haired, 14-year-old Star Wars nerd standing in a three-blockline at San Francisco's Northpoint Theater in May of 1979 to see a radical new science-fiction movie called *Alien* on opening day, presented in glorious 70mm, six-track Dolby stereophonic sound, those screams of pure joy shot into the heavenly cosmos and far beyond.

Sir Ridley Scott's original *Alien* was a revolutionary game-changer in ways that are still reverberating throughout the horror and superhero genre-obsessed realm we revel in today. Decades ahead of its time, yet also sublimely ripe for its time, *Alien* inspired and infused future generations of screenwriters and filmmakers with raw, carnal creativity more than any off-world odyssey of the late 20th Century. Disagree? Then, talk to an army of adolescent boys who cut their geek teeth on this monstrous cinematic morsel.

Yes, Dan O'Bannon's and Ron Shusett's screenplay, *Star Beast*, was a smart, revamped version of the 50s monster classic, *It! The Terror From Beyond Space,* and the

Strange rumors and clandestine details filtered out slowly in the innocent, pre-internet summer of '78, when word first hit of some weird wonder being filmed of a doomed space mission and a stowaway beast. Well-worn sci-fi fanzines like *Starlog* and *Cinefantastique* poked from pockets of many a nerdy Bay Area kid, read in between an impromptu dash to the bakery for glazed donuts, Round Table pizza runs, and Saturday afternoon treks to Talbot's Hobbies in San Mateo for fresh packs of Estes rocket engines or tiny glass bottles of Testors enamel paint to finally finish that impossibly badass XB-70 Valkyrie model.

young British commercial director Ridley Scott was a casual shrug, being largely unknown by fans and Hollywood, save for a saber-rattling turn helming the little-seen 1977 period revenge drama, *The Duelists*. And deviant Swiss artist H. R. Giger was fettering away in obscure avant-garde Euro galleries with his perverse, bio-mechanical oddities. But it was precisely this perfect storm of genius that allowed *Alien* to hatch, when sci-fi was veering off into a dangerous, post-*Star Wars* direction with endless *Battlestar Galactica, Buck Rogers,* and *The Cat From Outer Space* offerings, sweetly dressed in candy colors and shiny ships swiftly stamped off the Hollywood assembly line.

What amalgamated into the fiercely original, monumentally cool film, *Alien*, would be dissected and discussed for decades, especially now in its 35th anniversary year... and well it should.

Who can deny recalling the first strident chords of Jerry Goldsmith's ominous score, the shocking R-Rated trailer, eerie, dark imagery and its ingenious "In Space No One Can Hear You Scream" tagline? The earliest memory that attached itself to my cortex

like a vicious facehugger was the vivid collection of 11-by-14 inch, 20th Century Fox lobby cards displayed at the Belmont Theater in California. Mostly of the Nostromo crew on LV-426, close-up character portraits, and the interiors of the deep-space tug, but also of astronauts clambering onto the petrified Space Jockey.

Much of its erotic imagery with the derelict ship's vaginal openings and pulsating semi-transparent eggs was lost on my early teen brain but the sense of sublime mystery and brooding terror it evoked resounded inside my cranial cavity like a tiny ticking bomb. In an era where every teaser, trailer, featurette, TV spot, and poster are devoured long before the film event actually transpires, those blissfully unaware times lent themselves well to the mounting dread of *Alien*'s slick marketing campaign.

We were all mere lambs to the slaughter.

1979 was also a banner year for many genre flicks, including *The Warriors, Meteor, Mad Max, Moonraker, Star Trek: The Motion Picture,* and Disney's *The Black Hole.*

But *Alien* was a creature of a very different nature.

Entrenched barriers were crossed between coarse horror and high art, boundaries breached and bulldozed, as the world of mature adulthood loomed on my horizon like the derelict organo-form starship canted in a rubble of rocks on the barren, hostile planetoid.

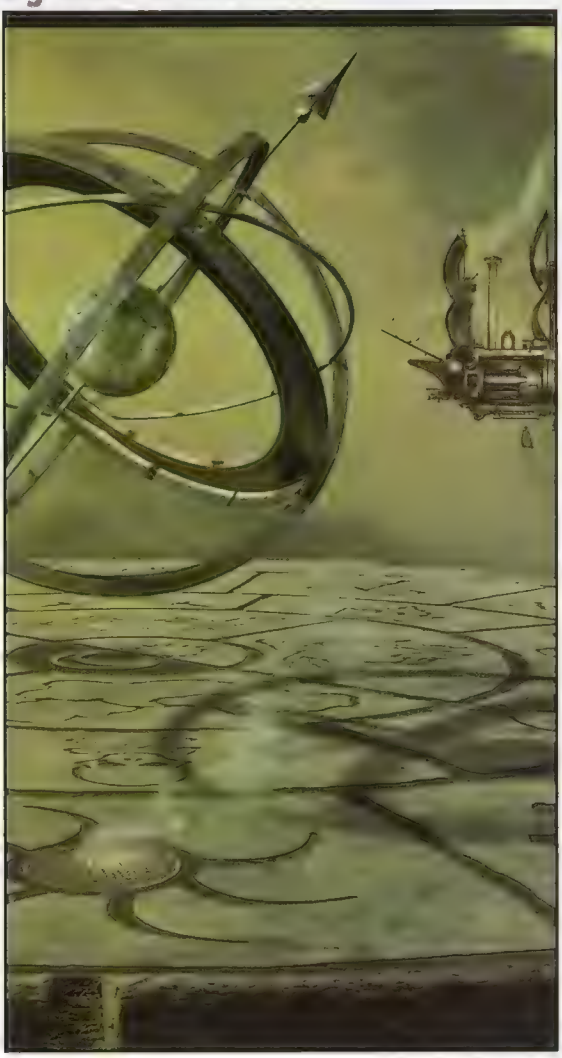
Subsequent sequels and semi-prequels have come and gone but the resonance of this sublime piece of filmmaking at a pivotal time in Hollywood is something to be marked and remembered. So light a birthday candle, take a deep breath, make a wish, and go watch *Alien* once more with someone you love, preferably in the dark!

And if you feel the need to scream, you have our permission.

ADAPTING THE RUSH

An Interview With Kevin J Anderson

By Dan Wickline



Fan... it's a word we throw around casually most often referring to someone's more than mild interest in something. But it's derived from the word fanatic and that would not be anywhere near mild interest. In pop culture there are some truly dedicated fan bases that if an author makes one wrong step they are done for. Kevin J. Anderson has delved into worlds with rabid fan-bases such as *Star Wars, Star Trek, X-Files, Dune,* as well as the Marvel and DC Universes. Another very loyal fan-base are those that follow the Canadian rock band Rush... and Mr. Anderson seems just as comfortable in their world as well.

ADVENTURING IS FOR THE YOUNG...
REMEMBERING IS FOR THE OLD.
BUT IN ORDER TO REMEMBER, ONE MUST HAVE DONE THE THINGS IN THE FIRST PLACE.
TOO MANY PEOPLE FORGET THAT.
IT SEEMS LIKE A LIFETIME AGO-- WHICH, OF COURSE, IT WAS... ALL THAT AND MORE. A GOOD LIFE, TOO, THOUGH IT DIDN'T ALWAYS FEEL THAT WAY.
HOW DO I TELL THAT?
YOU'LL NEVER GET ME! I'M THE ANARCHIST!
GRANDPA OWEN, COULD YOU TELL US A STORY?
MY STORIES ARE FOR EVERYONE... BUT ONLY THOSE WHO WANT TO LISTEN.

YOU'VE STATED IN OTHER INTERVIEWS THAT YOU AND NEIL PEART HAVE BEEN FRIENDS FOR 25 YEARS. HOW DID YOU TWO MEET AND IN THAT TIME WERE THERE OTHER POTENTIAL COLLABORATIONS BEFORE *CLOCKWORK ANGELS*?

My first novel, *Resurrection, Inc.*, was completely inspired by the Rush album "Grace Under Pressure." I put that in the acknowledgments of the book, autographed copies to the three members of the band, and mailed off copies to their record label. About a year later I got a letter in my mailbox from Neil Peart, saying how much he liked the book. We've been corresponding ever since...that was in about 1990. We did collaborate on a nice atmospheric dark fantasy story, "Drumbeats," which called on some of Neil's experiences in Africa. My big SF novel *Hopscotch* and my epic fantasy *The Edge of the World* are both dedicated to Neil. (All of those titles are now back in print.) There are subtle references to some of my books in various lyrics. And we often exchange ideas, of course.

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT? WAS IT ALWAYS A CONCEPT ALBUM FIRST AND THEN YOU WERE BROUGHT IN FOR THE NOVELIZATION OR DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE EARLIER STAGES? WAS IT ALWAYS PLANNED WITH A MULTI-MEDIA APPROACH OR DID THAT GROW IN STAGES OVER TIME?

Neil was talking to me about steampunk as a genre as he began his initial pondering of a new album, and he told me some of his ideas, while I bounced some ideas back. As the album was more sketched out, Neil saw the various possibilities that the story could manifest, including a novel. When my wife asked him who was going to write the novel, he said "Well, Kevin is, of course." As I was writing the novel, though, I could see the fabulous visual potential, so I suggested that it would work well in comic format, and began talking to some of my contacts in the comics industry.

What was your initial first reaction to hearing the *Clockwork Angels* album?

I had been reading the lyrics as Neil wrote them, and I heard early rough tracks, one or two songs at a time...but by that time I was already working on plotting the novel in detail. Then at last I could hear all the songs together, start to finish, like the soundtrack to the story I was creating in my head. It was like switching the idea from black-and-white to color.

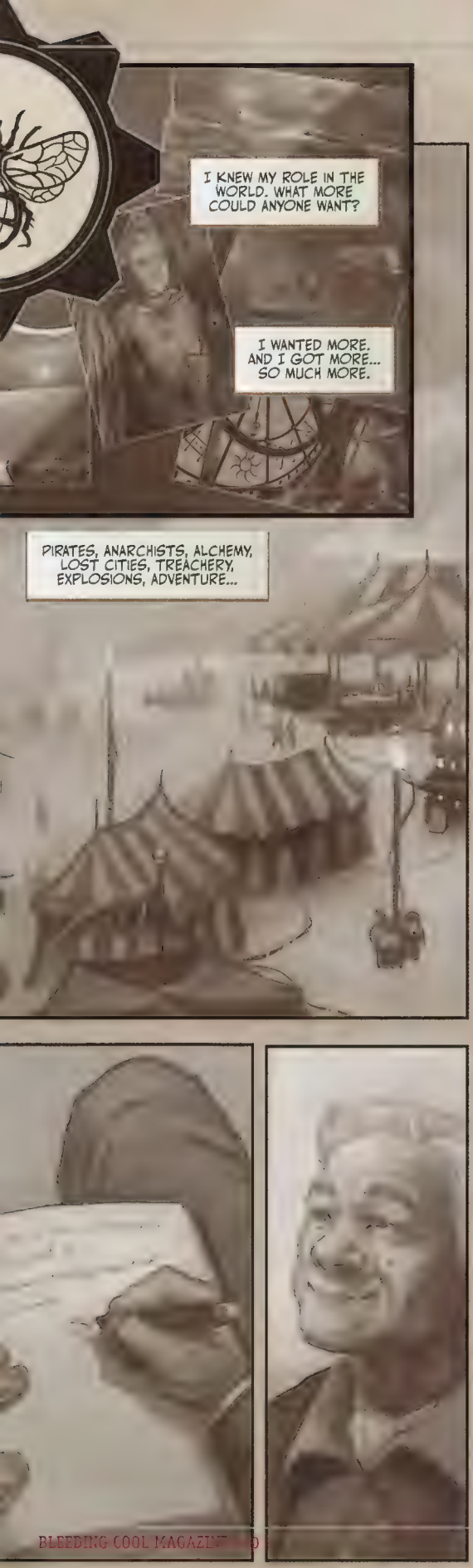
What was the collaboration like when it moved from music to the novelization? How much was Neal and or the rest of the band involved and how much was left to your expertise?

Neil and I worked closely in developing the story, the character, the settings, the plot, and the theme. We spent a day climbing a 14,000-ft mountain peak in Colorado, just to brainstorm the Watchmaker, the Anarchist, what each one was after, how they would effect our main character. We talked about order and chaos, the "freedom extremist," lost loves and unrealistic expectations. It was a great brainstorming day. I am a detailed outliner as a writer, so I mapped out each chapter, each scene, and then began all the work of world building. I sent draft chapters to Neil each day as I wrote the, and he would usually have them back to me by the afternoon with comments, and he would suggest other scenes or characters.

Now the project is moving into comics. What made you decide you wanted to adapt it once again and how familiar were you at writing comic scripts?

The story is so visual and colorful, I wanted to see it adapted to the comics medium. I used my words to convey the dazzling landscape of the story, but I was interested to see what a comic artist would do with it. (And of course we would love to

FROM THE VERY START, I HAD STABILITY, MEASURABLE HAPPINESS, A PERFECT LIFE.
EVERYTHING HAD ITS PLACE, AND EVERY PLACE HAD ITS THING.
ADVENTURING IS FOR THE YOUNG...I WISH THAT I COULD LIVE IT ALL AGAIN.


I KNEW MY ROLE IN THE WORLD. WHAT MORE COULD ANYONE WANT?
I WANTED MORE. AND I GOT MORE... SO MUCH MORE.
PIRATES, ANARCHISTS, ALCHEMY, LOST CITIES, TREACHERY, EXPLOSIONS, ADVENTURE...

see a film adaptation, too!) Prior to that, I had a lot of experience in writing comics, having worked for DC, Marvel, IDW, Dark Horse, Wildstorm, and Topps, so it was a natural for me.

For those who haven't heard the album or read the novel, what is *Clockwork Angels*?

Clockwork Angels is a steampunk fantasy adventure, as a young man is caught between the forces of the Watchmaker (who tries to impose order on the world) and the Anarchist, who wants to bring it all down. He has adventures with steamliners, pirates, lost cities, airships, alchemy, and a steampunk carnival. And, of course, the famed Clockwork Angels.

How closely tied are the three formats? Does each version tell the same story or do they vary in some ways?

The comics tell the same story we developed for the novel, and both go hand-in-hand. The songs on the album are like snapshots of the larger story. You can certainly enjoy the masterful music of Rush without worrying about the full details of the story. But if you've read the story, you'll get a lot more out of the music.

THAT ONE, THERE...IT LOOKS LIKE A DRAGON.
SEE ITS WINGS, THE HEAD, LAVINIA?
OWEN HARDY, WHY DO YOU ALWAYS SEE SHAPES IN THE CLOUDS?
I WONDER WHY I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO DOES...

He did the album cover, art for the novel and now covers for the comics. How much has Hugh Syme's art played into the overall process of the story telling?

Hugh was also an imaginative collaborator. He has worked with Rush for decades, and I enjoyed many conversations on the phone with him as the story took shape. Neil also loves brainstorming with Hugh. We would talk about a character or a specific scene, and Hugh would find some way to crystallize it and add a great twist. Then, after seeing his portrayals, I would go back to the scenes and add the details or metaphors he was using.

You have written in some of the most popular universes, how do you approach telling a story like this and how does it differ from working on properties like *Star Wars*, *Dune* or even *Batman and Superman*?

Clockwork Angels is based on a story and lyrics by Neil, so it was really his ideas and my collaboration with them. We had administrative and logistical interactions with Rush management, but it was pretty much in our hands. Neil reads every script within hours of when I send him a draft, and he works with Nick Robles, our artist, as he develops sketches and character ideas. With *Dune*, Brian Herbert and I are collaborators and we draw on our own abilities, as well as a large backlog of Frank Herbert material. *Star Wars* or *Batman and Superman* have a much greater universe of details—as well as approvals—to stay consistent with, so those are greater challenges. But, for a die-hard fan like me, it's all fantastic fun.

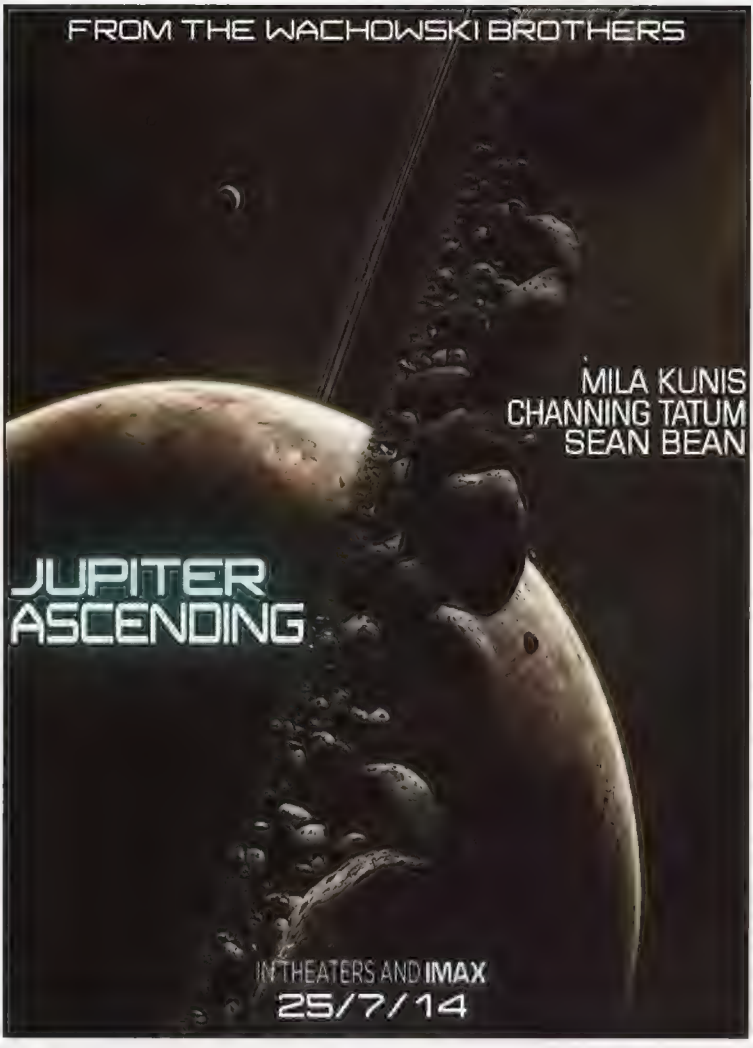
THE FUTURE OF SCI-FI
By Brendon Connelly

We're half way through 2014 already. Okay, I'll admit it. I'm not. I'm just a third of the way, and having to project my mind into the future. Not a newfangled sci-fi thing, mind you – just the realities of writing something that people will print onto paper. But in projecting my mind forward, I'm thinking about others doing the same thing. Because, between now and the end of the year, there's plenty of big screen futures headed our way, and they seem impressively distinct.

The big tentpole for June, at least as far as non-sequels go, is Tom Cruise and Doug Liman'stime loop war movie, *Edge of Tomorrow*. It's not an 'original,' per se, being based upon a Japanese novel, but it's no franchise movie. Just yet. The film's central premise is that Cruise plays a soldier in a war against the aliens, and they keep killing him. Every time he dies, however, he comes back again, sometime before his demise, and "gets to play the level again." Emily Blunt plays another soldier who had the same experience, and who learned that this bio-reboot is a special power of the enemy alien army.

Well, no wonder the space beasties are winning. Though, of course, the story of *Edge of Tomorrow* is all about Cruise and Blunt turning that power back on the aliens who brought it to the battlefield in the first place. Didn't they ever hear that old warning about not carrying a stick into a fight if you weren't prepared for the other person to take it off of you and whip you with it? Guess that's an Earth thing. The extended footage preview I was permitted to see actually went some way in selling me on this one. I haven't been too convinced by many of Liman's previous films but *Tomorrow* actually does seem to have a bit of an Edge.

July brings us the next instalment of the *Planet of the Apes* series, Matt Reeves' *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*. Again, the full film isn't finished back here in the mists of print deadline time, but the footage I've seen is extraordinarily textured, impressive stuff. This picture picks up some time after the events of *Rise*, with the Apes getting a real foothold on their way to the top of the



hill. The opening act of the film is entirely Ape driven, so when the humans do turn up, twenty or so minutes in, they're very much playing supporting roles. That alone is ambitious, but Reeves and company seem to have plenty of confidence and are loading the film up with all the big ideas and social significance that they can. I suppose that's the *Planet of the Apes* way, and dates back to the original novel. Shame they didn't always have these super-convincing CG character effects. The first few films look quite off-puttingly stiff in comparison.

We'll also be seeing the next big sci-fi blowout from the Wachowskis in July. *Jupiter Ascending* is definitely future-set stuff but it's a brave new world of fantasy tropes, space opera hijinks, and surreal touches that doesn't feel like "hard SF" at all. There are dragons in it, even. Well, they look like dragons anyway. And are meant to. You've probably seen more of *Jupiter Ascending* than I have, by now, so you'll have to tell me – on the back of a post-card or stuck-down envelope, please – if it's actually turning out to be the loopy, candy-coloured, high-gloss fairy tale I'm expecting. I don't think the similarities to *Snow White* and *Little Red Riding Hood* are only in my imagination.

August sees the release of *Guardians of the Galaxy*, which is much discussed elsewhere in this very issue, Luc Besson's *Lucy*, and the new *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* do-over. Both *Lucy* and *Turtles* are about characters gaining a superboost to their evolution after exposure to a synthesised chemical compound. That's probably where the similarities end.

In *Lucy*, Scarlett Johansson plays a drug mule that undergoes a strange transformation when the substance leaks into her blood stream. She gets all kinds of beat 'em up skills and even some very god-like

powers to see the world in a super-super-intelligent way. This film could either be pulling a fast one on us – ie. she's just tripping and it's all just subjective to Lucy's experience – or working almost as a metaphor for that, rendering in the character's reality the effects of a crazy trip. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is definitely pulling a fast one on us. I mean, they've gotten us talking about the new film from Jonathan Liebesman, director of *Battle Los Angeles*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning*, and *Wrath of the Titans*, so somebody must be pulling a cruel trick somewhere.

In any case, the new *Turtles* features one of those tightly-knit origin stories that ties all of the characters arcs together in a way that the messy – or some might say, simply more organic – original work did not. This time, April

O'Neil's dad and The Shredder were somehow related and it was as part of their relationship that The Turtles were created.

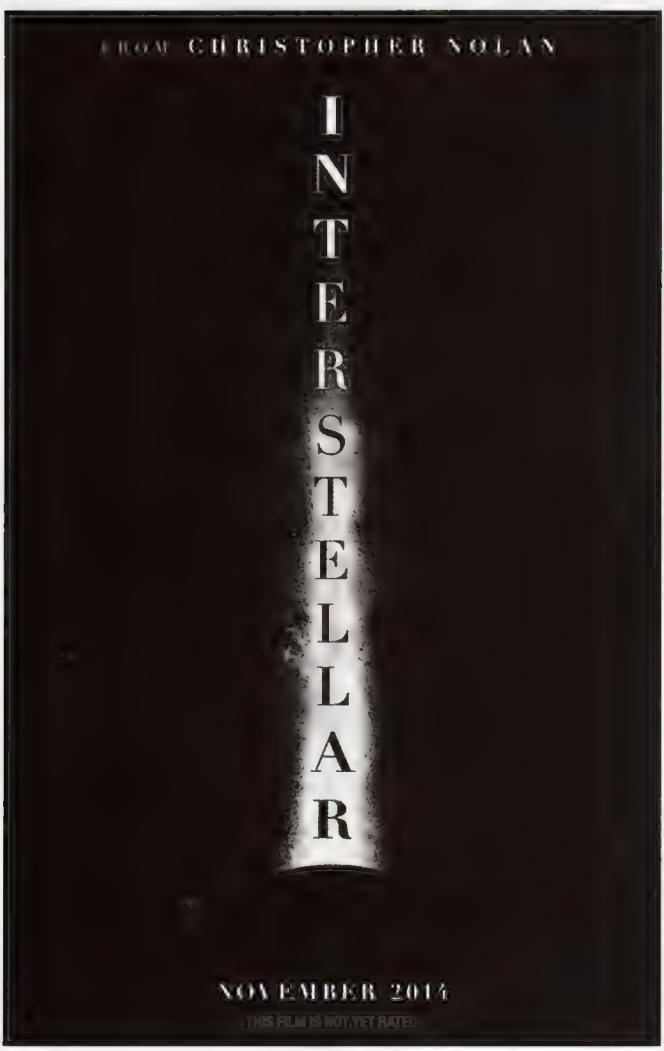
No, not like *that*. Though some fans might have found that preferable, perhaps.

The Maze Runner opens in September and after *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, it might have a hard time convincing audiences that there's anything fresh here at all. But the footage we've seen is actually really impressive, director Wes Ball is keen on giving us some real, beefed-up action and, at the heart of it all, mazes just seem to have some real resonance with folk.

Talking of *The Hunger Games*, the next instalment will be along in November. At this point, I think you know whether you're in or out for this series. I'm certainly in, though I do feel the second film lost its way a little when forced to handle the Quarter Quell, something far less interesting and more boringly fan-pandering than anything else in the whole series.

November also brings us *Big Hero 6* from Disney and *Home* from Dreamworks, a pair of CG toons with heavy sci-fi elements. In *Big Hero 6*, the hero, Hiro, builds a robotic replacement for his dead brother and takes on a dimension-hopping mad scientist. It's the first Disney toon to be based on a Marvel comics series and, so far at least, I'm hearing nothing but good things.

Home adapts the alien invasion picture book *The True Meaning of Smekday*. Isn't it great that we live in a world where there alien invasion picture books? Start 'em young, I say.



Conversely, Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* is bound to be marketed as the year's most mature sci-fi picture and it's definitely going to be one of the most po-faced. Plot details are largely under wraps, but the rumours I've heard say it's about a space mission launched after Earth's crops fail and we're about to plummet into planetary poverty and hunger. After the space craft housing our main characters goes through a worm hole, I hear, things are going to get really wild. Like *Contact*, but hopped on some of those drugs that leaked into poor old Lucy's stomach.

From where I stand – when I stand, even – the second half of 2014 seems to be nicely set up for bigger budget, slickly-promoted sci-fi. Some of these films even sound like they're trying hard to be good, smart stuff even while there's hundreds of millions of dollars riding on them appealing to idiots. I don't know if that future's so bright I'll have to wear shades, but it's certainly not looking overcast.

HARLAN ELLISON'S® "CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER" FINALLY GETS ITS DUE

by Gavin Lees

In 1965, award-winning author and *enfant terrible* of the science fiction world, Harlan Ellison, was hired to write for a newly-commissioned TV show called *Star Trek*. The single episode he wrote — "City on the Edge of Forever" — has become a legend in more ways than one. Not only has the episode won both a Hugo award and a Writers Guild of America award, as well as been voted the best *Star Trek* episode in numerous polls, but it has also been a hugely contentious part of the show's history. Ellison and the show's creator, Gene Roddenberry, have long battled over who was responsible for the episode's success, and the idea that its first draft was "unfilmable."

In an act that may settle that debate, this June, IDW will publish the comics adaptation of Ellison's original screenplay as a five-part miniseries. With Ellison's blessing, the script has been adapted by the Tipton brothers (responsible for many of IDW's recent Trek comics) with painted art by J.K. Woodward (who has recently finished work on the *Next Generation/Doctor Who* crossover series).

But why this, of all *Star Trek* scripts, of which many had rewrites and edits performed on them? To answer that, we need to examine the history of this controversial piece of TV lore, with some assistance from Ellison himself, whom I spoke with shortly after the series was announced.

Ellison is notorious as a boisterous rabble-rouser, and a storyteller prone to exaggeration — it's in part what makes his writing so remarkable and his public persona so notoriously difficult — and often it is best to take his anecdotes with a grain of salt. However, in all his many retellings of the genesis of "City on the Edge of Forever" and the subsequent misinformation that was spread about him and his work, he has been resolute. Not least of all in his criticism of Roddenberry — a fact for which he has suffered the ire of many devoted *Star Trek* fans — whom he paints as a talentless plagiarist who stole the very idea for the show: "One night before *Star Trek* had ever been thought of, Gene Roddenberry, and other people were having dinner with Sam Peeples, who had been working on *Wagon Train* and he said, 'You know what? Somebody ought to do a wagon train to the stars.' And the next day, Gene Roddenberry went to Paramount and they sold *Star Trek*. And that was the actual line of creation."

From that pitch, though, a series was born. After the pilot was filmed, it was shown to writers around LA, who were then invited to pitch ideas in order to flesh out the rest of the series. Ellison's script — once the pitch was accepted — took him ten months to produce. This was the reality of the freelance writer at the time, with many fingers in many series' pies, but Ellison also puts it down to a genuine love for his story, and that no other script he has written was produced with as much care and affection as "City…"

Its genesis, as Ellison tells it, was deceptively simple: "I conceived it as a love story, a simple love story between the lead Captain Kirk character and my interpretation of the classical American historical pre-suffrage minister, Aimee Semple McPherson. I postulated, in an alternate world, what

would have happened if Aimee Semple McPherson's campaigning for suffrage and America First had grown a little bit stronger? Would it have kept America out of World War II long enough for the Nazis to have finally finished developing the heavy water formula, which would have given them the atom bomb before us? What if Kirk and Spock could travel in time, and could go back to the depression so that Kirk could meet this fabulous woman?"

The time travel conceit — of returning to the past in order to change the present — Ellison believes is his original idea, even though one can trace this idea further back from his script, most famously in Ray Bradbury's "Sound of Thunder" short story. This has not stopped Ellison over the years from pursuing those he sees as stealing his ideas: "I devised the means that, of course, has now been stolen by every other TV show and movie for fifty years hence, and they don't even think they're stealing anymore, because they've stolen so much they think it's in the public domain, which is why I've sued and won every time. In fifty years out here — I moved here in '62 — I've only been forced to sue twelve times. I could've sued *a hundred and* twelve times, but I didn't, because either I thought, "Screw it," because they didn't do a very good job, or it was literary license, or not worth my time because a lawsuit is a very difficult, laborious thing. So, I did my story and it's been rewritten and reiterated and rebooted so the people who have stolen – as many times as they have – even some of the famous names that you write about in *Bleeding Cool*, and I don't reprimand them, I know most of them. I don't say, 'Hey, motherfucker, I saw your last over-the-top multi-million dollar reboot of my story. Why don't I have three dollars in my pocket, and a cup of coffee, and a piece of pizza? And a small card acknowledging my name, as it is at the end of *The Terminator* because I

SHIP'S LOG: STAR-DATE 3134.6. OUR CHRONOMETERS STILL RUN BACKWARD. WE HAVE FOLLOWED THE RADIATION TO ITS PLANET-SOURCE HERE AT THE RIM OF THE GALAXY, BUT SOMETHING ELSE IS HAPPENING...
WHEN WE LEFT EARTH, EACH OF THE 430 CREWMEMBERS OF THE ENTERPRISE WAS CHECKED OUT STABLE. BUT IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS—SO MUCH STRESS ON THEM. WE HAVE CONTINUOUS PSYCH-PROBES, BUT WE KNOW SOME HAVE BEEN ALTERED. EVEN SOME WHO MAY HAVE GONE SOUR: WE CAN'T KNOW UNTIL THE FLAW SHOWS UP.
AND BY THEN, IT'S TOO LATE... MUCH TOO LATE...
JEWELS OF SOUND. SO EXPENSIVE, SO ILLEGAL. YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU A DREAM-NARCOTIC THEY'VE BANNED ALL THROUGH THE GALAXY? TSK-TSK, LIEUTENANT, HOW FAR YOU'VE FALLEN.

sued Cameron?' So, I don't say it to them, I just boogie on along."

At that point he was, if not the most respected of the show's writers, at least the most notorious. Everyone was eager to see what he would produce — including William Shatner. As Ellison recalls, the minute he had finished the script, he was asked to call Shatner so he could read it. After spending hours at Ellison's home perusing the script, and obsessively counting his lines and comparing them to co-star Leonard Nimoy's, Shatner returned to Roddenberry with concerns that his character was not featured heavily enough. How this sat with Roddenberry is anyone's guess, but having his leading man voice concerns about a script that had not yet been delivered was not the most auspicious of beginnings.

That first draft is what we are about to see realised in comics form — it is the version that Ellison stands by, and it is the same version that won him the Writers Guild of America award. Fans of the show will know the plot inside-out: Dr. McCoy is driven insane by an accidental drug injection, and escapes to a planet where a time portal leads him into the past. Finding that Bones has altered history, Kirk and Spock have to travel back through the portal and correct the timeline. They arrive in depression-era America, where Kirk falls in love with Sister Edith Keeler (Ellison's Aimee Semple McPherson analogue, played by Joan Collins), but discovers that she must die in order for the future to be corrected.

However, the original script is a very different. For one, there is no McCoy — rather a rogue crewmember of the Enterprise who is dealing in futuristic drugs — and instead of a disembodied voice, the Guardians of Forever are two giant, god-like beings. The romance between Kirk and Edith is also much more of a focus, with her preaching taking much more of anti-war stance, and the interaction between the lead characters

is more in-depth. For the first time, Spock refers to Kirk as "Jim," displaying his compassionate human side in a way that would only really come to the fore much later in the series.

This first draft was not wholly Ellison's ideas, though, as early intervention from Roddenberry had ensured that the Enterprise was put into jeopardy, which is why we see it transformed into a pirate vessel. From there, however, things only got worse for Ellison. As he so delicately puts it, "Roddenberry never stopped shitting in my consommé." On its first submission, the show runner asked for changes, as he strongly objected to the drug-dealing subplot, and even Edith's pacifist ideals, which were changed to suit Roddenberry's cosmic utopian ideas.

That was not the end of it, however, and several more complaints were volleyed at the writer, saying that the script was unfilmable, that it would cost too much, and more changes had to be made. Ellison rewrote, he recalls, around 16 times accommodating the wishes of the producers, but even then, his script was taken by Roddenberry for final doctoring. Although, many of these revisions were not made the show's creator: "Roddenberry gifted it off to other people," said Ellison, "Roddenberry did very little on his own. Some of them were far better than he, a couple of whom were as good as I – and may have been better – and some of whom couldn't wipe their ass with a lit candle." Some of those writers were Ellison's friends, one of whom — D.C. Fontana — kept her involvement a secret from Ellison for over thirty years.

Once the show aired, though — as the penultimate episode of the first season — the reception was suitably enthusiastic. It has since gone on to feature in nearly every list of the best *Star Trek* episodes in a variety of publications and fan sites. However, it was only the beginning of Ellison's troubles.

Off the back of *Star Trek*'s success, many books were written about the series, and many interviews carried out with its cast and creators. Whenever "City on the Edge of Forever" was the topic, Ellison couldn't help but feel betrayed as he read about other people taking credit for the success of his episode — even bringing the argument down to petty quibbles over the budget.

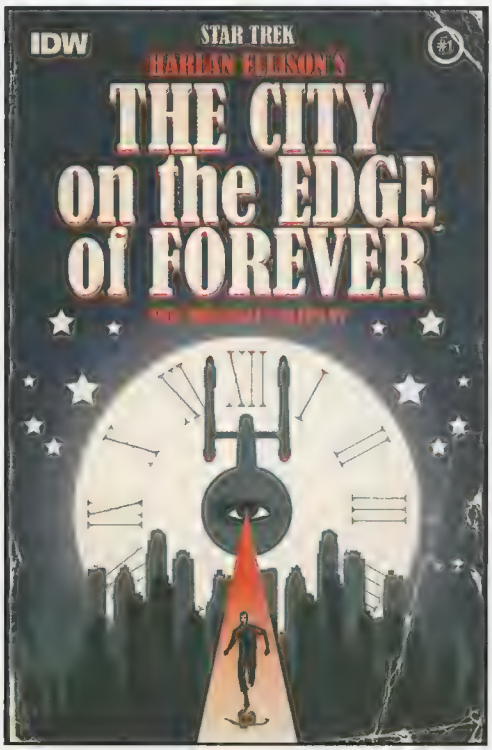
The most recurring complaint was from Roddenberry who repeatedly said that Ellison had got the characters all wrong, often with the refrain, "He had my Scotty dealing drugs!" While this is not true — Scotty isn't even in the episode, but that's a forgivable error given the number of edits every script would have gone through — Roddenberry also had the benefit of hindsight. At that point, the *Star Trek* characters were not fully-formed, so while some of the actions in Ellison's script may seem strange to us today, that's only due to our subsequent familiarity with them in TV, film, novels, and so on.

Like the snark-hunting Bellman said, "What I tell you three times is true," and these oft-repeated mistruths about the series were becoming fact, even to a ludicrous degree when Joan Collins wrote about how her character, Edith Keeler, was "in love with Hitler," or when William Shatner tried to take some of the credit for "reasoning" with Ellison and trying to get him to change the script. Understandably, this was a bone of contention for Ellison, as nobody's accounts of its origin levelled with his own recollections.

In an attempt to set the record straight, he published the original teleplay, along with a lengthy introduction, in 1996. "I told the whole and complete truth of the writing of the original teleplay as I knew it in my book *Harlan Ellison's Original City on the Edge of Forever,* and there are millions of copies out there." Even so, Ellison is always

keen for more readers, and to capitalise on the controversy, and managed to sneak in a plug: "Anybody who's reading this can do me the favor of putting a dollar in my pocket — because I'm not getting paid for this interview — by going to buy the book! It's very inexpensive and quite entertaining."

Even recently, "City..." has been a source of ire for Ellison. In 2009, he filed a lawsuit against CBS-Paramount for unpaid residuals from the show, mainly from merchandising and adaptations that had used his creations. This was a timely move, as the rebooted J.J. Abrams *Star Trek* movie was just about to be released, and a whole wave of nostalgic merchandise and original series re-releases with it. Ellison made no illusions that this was about anything other than money, in a published press release: "Am I doing this for other writers, for Mom (still dead), and apple pie? Hell no! I'm doing it for the 35-year-long disrespect *and* the money!" His statement continued, "when you aren't getting paid for the marvels you helped bring forth — fine, hard, careful artifacts that are making others pig-rich — at some point *any* sane person knows he has three, and only three choices: the first is to sit around dinner parties and ceaselessly whine over your sushi about how they screwed you, boo hoo, but you can't beef about it Out There in the World or they'll blacklist you; the second is to pick up an Uzi somewhere, crash your SUV through a Studio gate, and just run amok; and the third, last, choice is this one – to act like an adult, to take 'em on in Federal Court and to make the greedy, amoral bastards blink blood out of their eyes." The lawsuit was settled for an undisclosed sum, with the author reportedly happy with the outcome.



So, why now? After so much distance between the author and his original commission, and so much bad blood accumulated over that time, why did Ellison want to dredge up — yet again — probably the most contentious work of his career? "And the answer to the question," Ellison states, "is because my editor, Chris Ryall, with whom I have worked and have come to trust 111%, who is my friend and will treat my work properly, came to me and said, 'It's time to do it.'"

The author could not be happier with the results, and seemed to take great delight in adopting a carnival barker persona to proclaim: "The job that is being done by J.K. Woodward from the adaptation of my original script — line by line, speech by speech, camera angle for camera angle – everything I wrote in a very, very detailed script over and over again — not once, not twice, but about sixteen times. Everything that I wrote has been done by Scott and David Tipton in adapting this, they've been very faithful, very punctilious – that's exactly the word — and J.K. Woodward has done, I think, the best art of his career in bringing to life the movie that I ran in my head when I sat in my treehouse on Bushroad Lane."

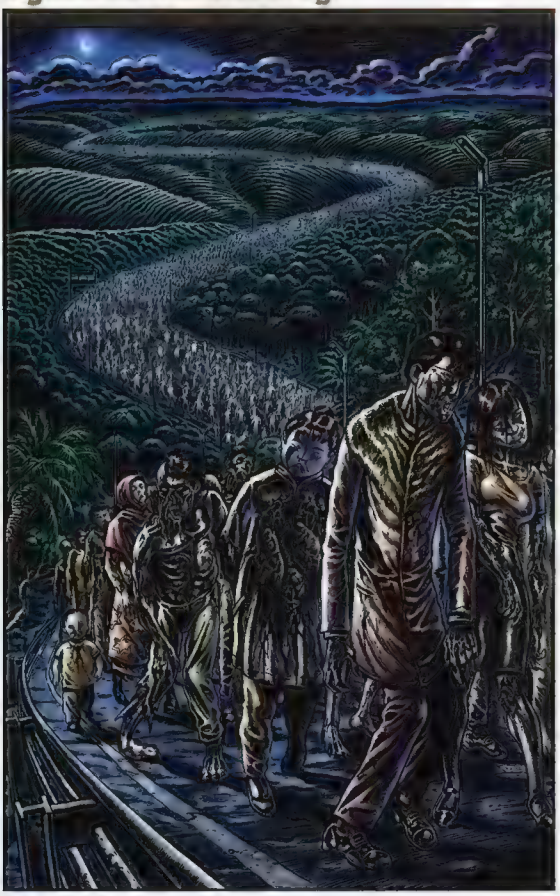
Star Trek: Harlan Ellison's Original City on the Edge of Forever Teleplay #1 will be available in June. Each issue of the series will feature a special cover by artist Juan Ortiz, with variant covers by movie poster artist Paul Shipper.

MAX BROOKS CHALLENGES MILLENIALS TO FACE ADVERSITY HEAD ON

By Tom W. Huxley

MAX BROOKS CHALLENGES MILLENIALS TO FACE ADVERSITY HEAD ON

By Tom W. Huxley



A man enters the lobby of London Super Con with his hand inside an individual portion packet of cornflakes. He tells me it's his lunch. The most convenient, nearest readily available dry food source: this is the diet of a zombie survivalist. This is my induction into the world of Max Brooks.

Having survived his own personal zombie apocalypse last year in the form of a blockbuster *World War Z* film that bore little resemblance to his bestselling novel of the same name, the writer of *The Zombie Survival Guide* now turns his attentions to two comic book projects: *Harlem Hellfighters*, a graphic novel telling the inspirational true story of a World War I platoon of black soldiers, and *Extinction Parade*, a comic book series wherein a zombie insurgency puts both humans and vampires on the endangered species list.

Tell me about The Harlem Hellfighters.

Max Brooks: In the First World War, a group of American soldiers was set up to fail by their own government because the last thing the United States wanted was a group of African Americans marching home in triumph. This was a time in American history when lots of black people were moving from rural South plantations to the North, working in factories. That was truly terrifying for the white status quo, and last thing they wanted was heroes marching down New York's Fifth Avenue showing other black people what they're capable of.

So the American government did everything they could to sabotage this group of Americans. Giving them poor uniforms, not enough training, they actually had to pretend to be private rifle clubs to get guns from their own government. They were sent overseas to dig ditches. And then, when they finally demanded they be put in combat, they were given to the French, which was the ultimate insult.

In 1917, the French were very keen to get American replacement troops. And General Pershing, our supreme commander, said absolutely not. He stood up to Foch and said, these are American troops, they will fight under the American flag as an American army with an American general … except for these black guys, you can have them. So, what an insult.

Now the French had had good luck with their African troops, so they assumed, maybe in their reverse racism, that all black troops were amazing. But I think also they were exhausted by this war, so they were grateful for anybody. So they put these guys in combat and they became one of the most decorated units in the entire United States Army. I wanted to tell that story, and here we are!

WHY ARE YOU TELLING THIS STORY NOW?

MB I started this fifteen years ago as a movie script. I wrote it, nobody wanted it, and then when I got into comics with Avatar, I thought this would be a great graphic novel. I never, never, never expected the phone call I got last week from my agent saying, uh, Will Smith wants to produce this. Okaaay... fifteen years of people saying no, and suddenly Will Smith wants to produce it? Nobody's more surprised than me.

HOW CLOSE TO REALITY IS YOUR DEPICTION OF THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS?

MB I have to say that every event in the book is either fictionalized, where I took something real and had a little creative licence, or 100% real. The fact that when the Germans attacked there was nothing in between Paris and the German army except the Hellfighters, the fact that after they were bombarded that night they then marched to bail out a French unit which was on the verge of collapsing: all real.

Henry Johnson: real guy, first American, black or white, to win the French Croix de Guerre. This is one of the reasons that I'm so passionate about the Hellfighters: this guy was in a listening post and they were jumped by a whole platoon of Jerries, Johnson fought them off with anything he had and by the end was fighting them off with nothing but a knife. If Johnson had been white, we'd already be on our third Henry Johnson remake movie.

James Reese Europe, he was a jazz megastar – and he gave up the fame and glory to go put on a uniform, and get lice, and get shot at in the trenches? I mean, that's unheard of nowadays. That would be like if Kanye gave up everything to go fight in Afghanistan. Can you imagine that?

There's a real guy, Eugene Jacques Bullard, black American, he was a flyer, he flew for the French flying corps. And I had him sort of lead the Hellfighters. I don't know if that ever happened, that's what I call creative licence. The character of Sergeant Manla, he's fictional, but he's based on the fact that there really was, supposedly, a full-blooded Zulu that served with the Harlem Hellfighters. So everybody was based on some kernel of truth even if they were fictional, and every event was based in reality.

WHAT KIND OF RESEARCH DID YOU AND ARTIST CAANAN WHITE DO FOR *THE HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS*?

MB I was always told in college: don't read other historians' accounts, try to get first-hand original documents. So I found a memoir called *From Harlem to the Rhine*, by one of the guys who fought, Captain Arthur Little. That was like my bible.

I also got to see a documentary from the 1970's with the last two living Harlem Hellfighters, called *Men of Bronze*, and that was not only important for facts, but it

was important for dialogue! Because how did these guys talk back then? I mean, you can't just have them talking like African-Americans today in Harlem, it's completely different. There was one guy, Melville T Miller, and I just studied him, and I watched that documentary every day when I was doing my dialogue. I'm no Garth Ennis when it comes to dialogue; I need to put in a lot more effort than he does.

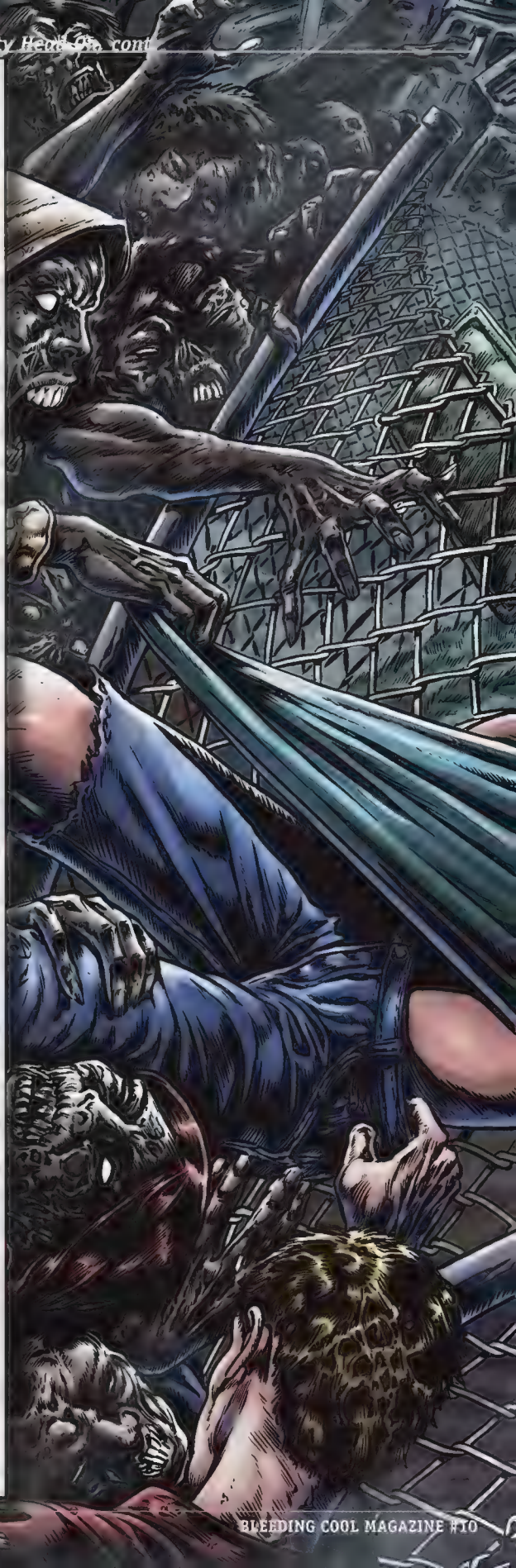
Caanan had the hardest job, ever. Not only are you having to draw historically accurate uniforms, weapons, whatnot; you have to draw real people. Mark and Edge and those guys are fictional, so we can play with that, but everyone else around them is real. James Reese Europe is a real guy, and there are real photos of him, and you really have to draw him, and Henry Johnson, and they have families... Caanan had the weight of the world on his shoulders, so I have all the respect for him.

Why do you think people should read *The Harlem Hellfighters*?

MB I think it's an amazing story of what human beings can accomplish. It's not just about black Americans; we all have within us the ability to triumph over adversity, and nobody had more adversity thrown at them than these guys, and nobody triumphed more than these guys. So I think it's a universally inspirational story.

Moving on to *Extinction Parade*. You've had a lot of success telling your zombie tales as novels. What made you decide to tell this story as a comic?

MB I wrote it first as a short story, and when I wanted to stretch it out, William Christensen (Publisher of Avatar Press) wanted to adapt it for me. He said you'll have a say on everything, the buck stops with you. I'd never farmed out my work to other people before. Mike Wolfer started writing scripts, I started reading



them, and they were brilliant. Brilliant. But they weren't me.

It comes from a very deep place where, if I'm going to put my name on something, I have to take responsibility for it from start to finish. I didn't know that about myself, this was definitely a journey of discovery. I just said, William, I need to just write the whole series as me; this cannot be a side job. It has to be my main focus.

WHY ARE YOU BRINGING VAMPIRES INTO THE MIX?

MB I chose vampires for a very specific reason, because of the philosophy of *Extinction Parade*: from our greatest weaknesses come our greatest strengths. I believe that we succeed as individuals and we've succeeded as a species because we've had to overcome tremendous adversity. We've had to learn from our failure, and it's made us much more resilient, and I think that survival skill would not exist in a species that was born at the top of the food chain, like vampires.

Vampires, in my mind, are the sabre-toothed cats. They're good at what they do, they've never been challenged, never had to struggle. They're pretty arrogant, and they deserve to be, up until they come up against their first existential crisis, where their one food source is being eaten out from under them, and suddenly they find themselves confronted with a challenge they have no experience in fighting.

Every individual human being knows life is hard. Sooner or later in your life, even if you've been coddled in your childhood, adversity's gonna come knocking. But if you're a vampire you've had a thousand years of comfortable joy. You're not ready! You don't have those survival skills. So it's literally what would happen when a species that has no experience with tragedy suddenly confronts the possibility of its own extinction.

WHERE WOULD YOU SAY THIS STORY COMES FROM?

MB All my life, young people have been in love with vampires. They're sleek, and cool, and sexy, and they've got super powers, and they're superhuman. And I've looked at vampires my whole life and I've thought, get a job!

I have the kind of mind that just can't stop thinking about the details. I remember when I saw *Underworld*. The vampires are all sitting around their gothic mansion, and they're all beautiful and sexy. And my first thought was, who pays the property taxes on that mansion? Just the logical details of life, who deals with this stuff? Because vampires clearly, they would want to take a bath – well who pays the water bill? And what if a pipe burst? Do you bring in a plumber? And who makes the phone call?

Now that I'm not just a grown-up but also a parent, my whole day is spent solving problems and making decisions. That's my whole day. I think that's why young people love vampires because young people get to swoon all day.

IT'S LIKE BEING YOUNG FOREVER.

MB The thing is, because I have spent the last twenty years just putting out fires and making hard decisions, I'm much more ready for crisis than I was when I was twenty. Everybody loves vampires because it's eternal youth. Well, youth is dumb! When I was young, I was dumb. I had no life experience. I wasn't ready for what was going to punch me in the face.

I wanted my vampires to be beautiful because I wanted them to become vampirised when they were young. They became vampirised in their late teens, early twenties; their breasts would be full, and there would be no laugh lines, but they would have no life experience. And that was important to me, as opposed to say had they been vampirised in their forties; yeah, they'd be a little saggy in places, they wouldn't look as good, but they'd be much better prepared for what was coming at them.

WHERE IS THE *EXTINCTION PARADE* HEADING?

MB Issues one through five were the march up to war, where they went through their periods of denial, and celebration, and then they had a period of passive anxiety, realising oh my god, oh my god, this is bad but the humans will solve it, the humans will solve it, oh crap the humans are not solving it. It doesn't even occur to them until then that they should take an active hand in their own destiny, because when you've spent your entire multi-century existence just living like a parasite, the notion of being proactive, or even reactive, does not occur to them.

So finally at the end of issue five is war. The next series. Called *Extinction Parade: War*, will be dealing with that war. Because

it's one thing for them to just slash up a group of zombies, but is that a long term solution? Can you really stop that many zombies? Is it too late? Are the humans already dying out? So these are all the questions.

I can say that the next few issues, they really are confronted with their weaknesses. They've never pushed themselves before. It's like the first time you go to the gym, you don't realise how weak you are until you try to actually lift the weights and you go, "Oh wow! Didn't know that!" They are going to be pushed physically and emotionally to the limit. And seeing where that line is.

WHAT IS THE KEY MESSAGE OF THIS STORY?

MB For me the most important message is about struggle, and I'm acutely aware of this now I have an eight-year-old son. I'm trying to raise him the right way, and one of the things I'm trying to teach him is, it's okay to fail. You're not going to get stronger and smarter if you don't get knocked down.

Millennials in my country have this term, "epic fail." Epic fail is good. If you don't epically fail, you'll never epically learn. I see all these kids who have never been taught to fail, to struggle. In my country, when two kids' soccer teams play each other, both teams get trophies because they don't want to hurt anybody's feelings.

The result is we now have a generation of twenty-somethings in my country nicknamed 'teacups,' because they're so fragile. They go on job interviews with their parents. I'm not kidding. They call their parents when they get in trouble at work. I have friends who are professors, who are constantly getting calls from parents, saying "you gave my son a B minus!" and they'd be like, "yeah, your son didn't do the work." They can't take criticism, which is shocking to me.

My twenties were nothing but getting my ass kicked, and my face rubbed in the mud. But these kids have been so coddled their whole childhood they don't know how to take criticism. Well, God forbid, what if a major crisis hits the United States, and this is the generation that's going to be called upon. What the hell's gonna happen?

I'm not just doing it to do zombies fighting vampires. There's something I really want to say with it.

Throughout our discussion Brooks uses Britishisms such as "zed" (instead of "zee") and "lorries" (instead of "trucks") to put me at ease. This is a man who somehow combines a worldly charm with a thoughtful nature and a youthful visage to create an overwhelming presence. If not for his meal of cornflakes, I might wonder if he didn't belong to the vampire species himself.

Extinction Parade: War debuts in July and *Harlem Hellfighters* is available now in all good bookstores.

BRINGING THE BOOM

A Candid Talk with Boom! Publisher Ross Richie

By Dan Wickline

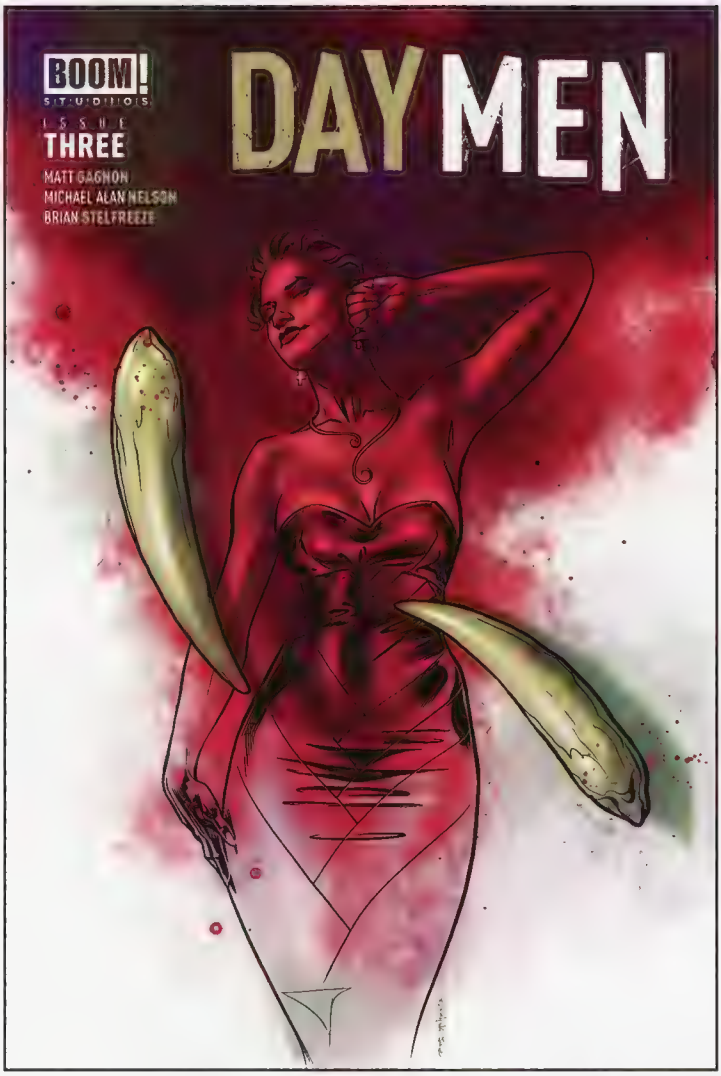
In 2005 two former Malibu Comics employees who had spent a decade working in the film industry returned to the comic world to create a new publishing company. Ross Richie and Andrew Cosby launched BOOM! Studios with its first publication, *Zombie Tales* #1 on June 22nd of that year. Over the next nine years the company would publish everything from licensed properties like *Eureka* (co-created by Cosby and Jaime Paglia) to original projects like *2 Guns* and *Day Men* to all-ages faire like *The Muppets* and *Adventure Time*.

So how does someone go from not even thinking of working in comics to becoming a publisher in just twenty years? Ross Richie is going to tell us.

LET'S START WITH A LITTLE BACKGROUND. YOU WORKED FOR MALIBU COMICS FROM 1993 TO 1995 IN THEIR MARKETING DEPARTMENT. THIS WAS DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE ULTRAVERSE THAT INCLUDED THE TV AND BUS STOP ADS. HOW DID YOU GET INTO COMICS IN THE FIRST PLACE AND WHAT WAS IT LIKE BEING PART OF LAUNCHING A WHOLE NEW UNIVERSE OF BOOKS?

ROSS RICHIE: I have the weirdest "getting into comics" origin story of all. I went to a convention and talked to one of the people behind the booth at Malibu. They took a shine to me and offered me a job. It just so happened I needed one! Which was funny because I didn't approach them seeking a gig. They just happened to have an opening and offered me a marketing position, a role I knew nothing about but I figured I'd take the gig and figure it out from there. Sure enough, I discovered a lot to like about marketing and learned a tremendous amount about how the business worked. I want to make a special call out to Tom Mason, my boss, who mentored me in the world very patiently and taught me much of the building blocks I later used to launch BOOM!.

Technically, I didn't start at the launch of the Ultraverse. I wasn't a part of the discussion to buy the bus bench ads, but arrived



were phenomenal talents. I will always appreciate getting to know Steve Gerber, one of the greatest writers the medium has ever seen and someone in my opinion whose influence helped inspire the Big Two to investigate more untraditional creator-driven comics and opened the door for so many creators to pass through after. It was also fun to work with young turks who were very clearly talented and on their way up, like James Robinson. One day I was a fan standing in line for autographs at a convention and the next day I was creating electronic press kits for my heroes Howard Chaykin and Walter Simonson and buying Barry Windsor-Smith sushi on Melrose Avenue with the company corporate credit card.

It was absolutely mind-bending.

In 2004 you helped relaunch Atomeka Press with Dave Elliot and Gary Leach. What were you doing between 1995 and 2004 and how did you get involved with Atomeka?

RR My original pre-Marvel acquisition boss, John Riley, had been a talent agent. He knew I was a film school kid and was getting phone calls from his old Hollywood pals asking about comic books that could become movies. This is right after *The Mask* and *The Crow* had huge successes and while we're at Malibu we're seeing *Men in Black* come together. Riley was tired of Hollywood, so he gave me these contacts and moved out of the country. Post-Marvel acquisition I worked directly under Tom Mason, but eventually I quit to pursue some of the things that Riley had handed me.

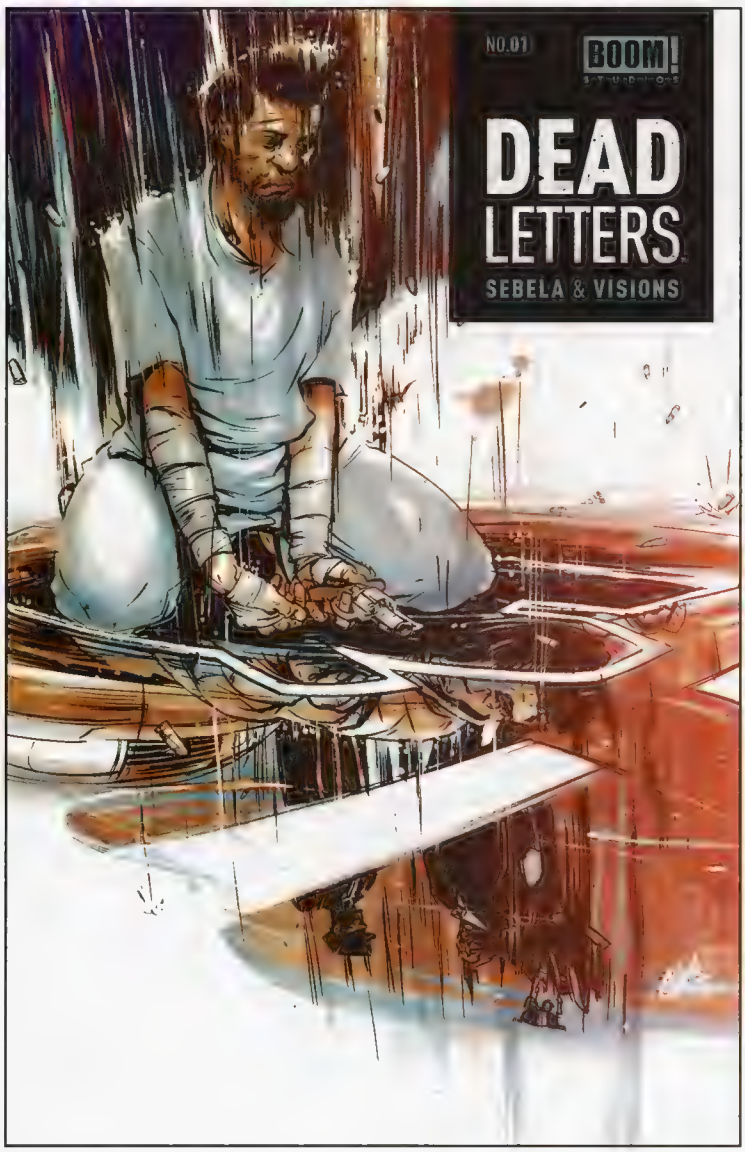
right as we started to implement them, so I was able to see how it all worked and what the effect was. The same thing was true for the commercials: I attended the shoots but was not involved in the strategy, all of that predated me by a few months. I showed up around the time that *Prime* #2 or #3 was hitting the stands, so right there in that first 60-day initial launch period. I didn't help plan it, but I did help carry out the plans once they were launched.

The experience was incredible and once-in-a-lifetime. Beyond just the sheer volume of what comics were selling in those days and how exciting it was to see such a successful launch with the Ultraverse, the creators we worked with on those books

I spent the late 1990s working on trying to get Matt Wagner's *Mage* comic book turned into a movie and got real close with Zack Snyder directing. I also worked on Troy Nixey's comic book *Trout*. Most people know Troy from the *Batman Elseworlds* comic he did called *The Doom That Came to Gotham* with Mike Mignola.

Through the years I became friends with one of my comic book heroes, Keith Giffen, and he invited me to co-write a series he was launching at Image, *Dominion*. It was a part of a big superhero push at Image that included *Invincible*.

The inker on the second issue was Dave Elliott, co-founder of Atomeka. Dave called me up and asked me to help him find a publisher to revive Atomeka. I made some calls, nothing stuck. After about nine months, I suggested to him that I could do it. And he bit.



WE MOVE TO 2005 AND THE LAUNCH OF BOOM! STUDIOS. TEN YEARS AFTER YOU FIRST GET INTO COMICS AND WATCHING THE BOOM AND BUST STAGE OF THE INDUSTRY, WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO START A COMIC STUDIO IN THE FIRST PLACE AND WHY THEN?

RR I originally revived Atomeka as a lark. I was a big fan of the original company and thought it would be a cool thing to do on the side. Keith Giffen really encouraged me to strike out on my own and found BOOM! and for that I owe him everything. It all kind of snowballed from there, it was never really a plan. I was very lucky that I had enough success in the beginning that it was worth chasing.

WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL PLAN FOR BOOM!? HOW DID YOU SEE IT AS BEING DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PUBLISHERS AT THE TIME AND HOW DID YOUR MARKETING BACKGROUND PLAY INTO YOUR PLANS? AND WHOSE IDEA WAS THE EXCLAMATION POINT?

RR I really didn't have much of a plan. I really got by initially with the help of people like Keith Giffen and Mark Waid.

The nudge in the right direction really came from Keith—he reached out to me in partnership and really pushed the idea that BOOM! needed

to have a partnership stake, that the idea that a publisher would be a partner would be attractive to creators. He felt creators often felt stranded and needed a sounding board and someone who didn't have a bigger stake than them, but rather equal skin in the game so that they're committed and they care.

I think that's what we do that's different. We're the next step in evolution as a comic publishing company—previously a Marvel or DC owned it all. In a post-Image world, creators own it all, but they have to work on spec and struggle to get the word out about their book or don't have a strong support team—you're really publishing a book all on your own. We believe that a company and a creator can cooperate in a positive way to each others' benefit to create something special that neither could do on their own.

Regarding marketing, it gave me a bit more sales-savvy in positioning those early BOOM! books to get retailer attention and give us enough sales to get started. It helped me understand how the game was played, and not been someone who was captive to his own creative ideas without any business knowledge about how to bring our stuff to the market.

The exclamation point was all me. But I did call Larry Young, the publisher of AiT-PlanetLar, to ask him if I was making a mistake. He heartily endorsed it so I took the plunge!

A GOOD BUSINESSMAN PLANS FOR EVERYTHING BUT THERE ARE STILL SURPRISES. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE SURPRISED YOU OVER THE YEARS AS A PUBLISHER, GOOD OR BAD?

RR Certainly our focus via KaBOOM! on All-Ages was never in the initial vision for the company. I just felt like doing that kind of material to the best of your ability was important for the next generation of readers and that we could prove that quality could win over an audience. For a lot of publishers it wasn't their top tier—we put our back into it, and through the process really ended up creating a space in comic shops for that kind of stuff.

In the same way, I was approached by

one of my publishing heroes, Denis Kitchen, to bring some of his catalog material as well as new stuff back into print. Denis was one of the pioneers of the Direct Market both as a creator, a publisher, and also as a distributor. It was an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I jumped on it. We launched BOOM! Town as an imprint to really showcase that stuff, but we could never really establish enough deal flow, get enough books out there to get momentum, and as such it never really worked. I wish we could have figured that out.

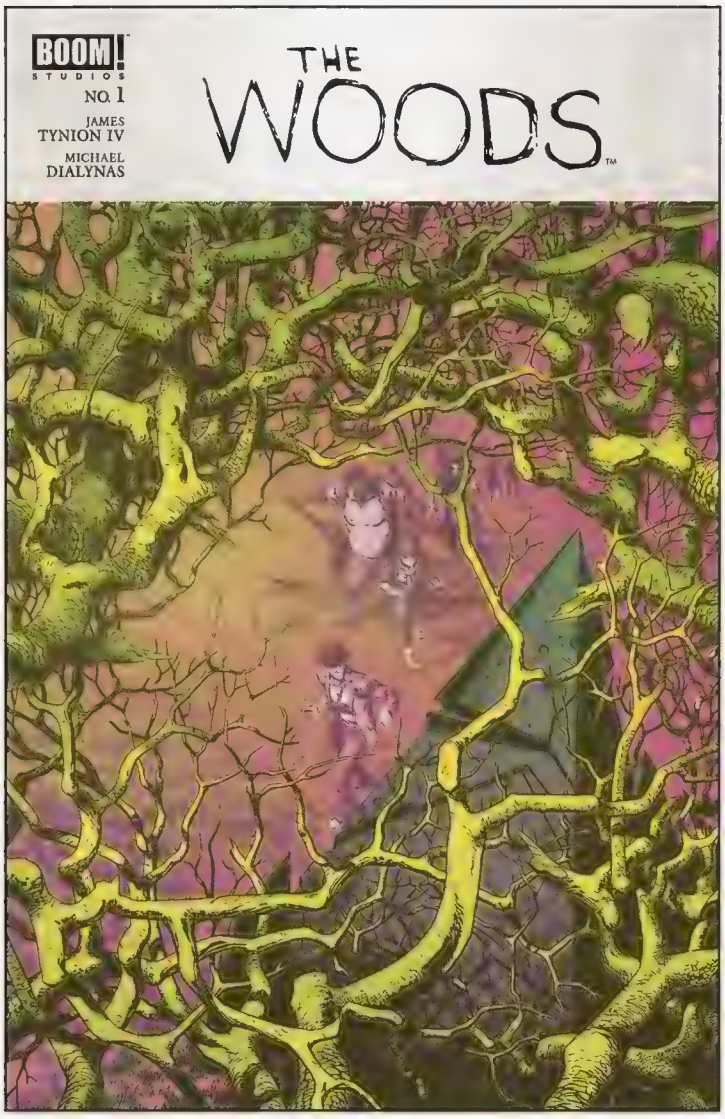
The biggest surprise of all is to be approached by Paul Levitz, who saw what we're doing and wanted to embrace us and help out with big picture ideas and planning. It's the thrill of a lifetime and if you'd have asked me last year if it was going to happen I'd have laughed in your face.

IF SOMEONE ASKED YOU... AND I GUESS I AM RIGHT NOW... WHAT BOOKS THAT YOU HAVE PUBLISHED IN THE LAST NINE YEARS WOULD YOU POINT AT AND SAY, "THAT'S WHAT BOOM! STUDIOS IS."

RR It's pretty agonizing to choose your favorite child, I really can't. Each series means so much when this is a venture you've nurtured from your spare bedroom apartment to where we are today. But I think the reality is it's the book that's on my desk right now. Tomorrow, it will be the next book that gets placed on my desk. We're at a place right now where we are consistently raising the bar, each new book fresh from the printer is a new world to fall in love with, a new creative team to champion.

RECENTLY IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT PAUL LEVITZ WAS JOINING THE BOARD OF BOOM! STUDIOS. THIS CAUGHT A LOT OF PEOPLE BY SURPRISE INCLUDING MYSELF. FOR ME MAINLY IT WAS THAT I HAD NO IDEA BOOM! HAD A BOARD. BESIDES PAUL, WHO ELSE IS ON THE BOARD AND HOW DOES IT WORK? ARE THEY THERE IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY OR DO THEY MAKE THE MAJOR DECISIONS?

RR The board is composed of investors—many comic book companies in the space actually have investors and boards, it's just not well known. Archaia had



both, IDW has them as well. The board acts as a resource to help the company grow—it's actually the aegis through which the Archaia acquisition happened—and their job is to provide advice and support as we go along.

AND NOW THE OTHER PART OF THAT QUESTION, HOW DID IT HAPPEN THAT PAUL JOINED THE BOARD AND FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW, WHAT DOES HE BRING TO THE COMPANY? WHAT WILL HIS ROLE BE?

RR Paul brings 45 years of experience. There's no one in comics with that level of authority or knowledge. To give you a day-to-day feel, I just called him to get his advice about two things: 1) how to structure a deal with a legendary creator that he knows very well so that the creator and the company both win in a very fair situation and 2) what he thought a defunct comic book series was worth as we evaluate it for possible acquisition. There's just not that many people who have cut the biggest deals with the biggest creators successfully and not that many people who have bought defunct libraries and acquired companies who can guide you like that.

It's the big picture stuff.

AFTER THE MOVIE SUCCESS OF *2 GUNS*, PEOPLE ARE WATCHING TO SEE WHAT YOU DO NEXT. WHAT IS THE CINEMATIC PLAN FOR BOOM! AND WHAT IS YOUR SPECIFIC ROLE IN THE PROCESS? WHAT IS MOST LIKELY THE NEXT PROPERTY WE'LL SEE FROM YOU GUYS ON THE BIG SCREEN?

RR The "cinematic plan" for BOOM! is pretty simple: We signed a first-look deal with 20th Century Fox so they get the first crack at anything we want to do. They have been incredibly supportive and have indicated to the biggest talent agencies that they should package the biggest directors and writers with our stuff and if they do, Fox will option the film rights. Fox has been very aggressive in supporting BOOM! and it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for BOOM!'s creators. Creative Artists Agency characterized the BOOM!/Fox deal as the "richest comic book deal in Hollywood history" so Fox has really stepped up. I have no idea if it really is the richest because I don't see other publishers' and creators' deals, but you can be damn sure that I'm going to do my best to see that our creators

have a shot at unlocking that value.

As for my role, I am running the first-look deal and the company. Stephen Christy, Archaia's former Editor-in-Chief, works with me day-to-day on the development side. We're hard at work every day to deliver the most exciting stuff to Fox, who is hungry and looking for material to make into movies.

As for the next likely property, I have three things lined up on deck at Fox this week, but you'll have to wait for the announcement after they're locked in!

As you run through your ninth year and head for your tenth, what does the future hold for BOOM! Studios? What do you have coming up in the short term? And what are the long term goal for your company?

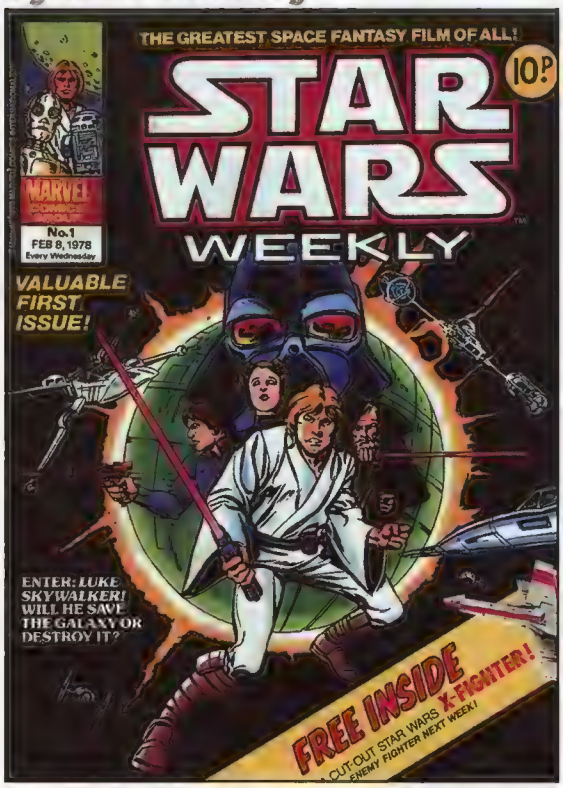
RR The fun part is that I don't know. That's what makes this so interesting to me. We constantly grow and evolve. But in the short term, I am extremely proud of the originals we are publishing this year, from *Curse*, to *The Returning*, to *The Woods*, to *Dead Letters*, to *Suicide Risk*, to *The Empty Man*, to *Day Men*, to the upcoming George Perez stuff, and so many other things I can't talk about. I am extremely proud of the level of licensing we're doing from *Big Trouble in Little China*, to *Peanuts*, to *Adventure Time*, to *Regular Show*, to *Garfield*, and to *Hellraiser*.

What does the future hold? We will continue to be a company that brings in non-traditional comics fans like the folks that bought *Adventure Time* and *Lumberjanes*. No one in the business can launch something like BOOM! Box successfully like we just did with that unique voice and that mix of creative that feels next generation and fresh and original and unlike anything anyone else is doing. Breaking down walls in the business is one of my favorite things to do and we've really done that. And buying Archaia is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to continue growing the most innovative graphic novel publisher in the space. I'm really excited to share what we have planned for that imprint in 2014 and beyond.

MARVEL'S BRITISH INVASION:

Star Wars Comics in the United Kingdom

By Rich Handley



Before Dark Horse revitalized *Star Wars* in the 1990s, Marvel Comics published the first stories beyond the silver screen. American fans may not realize, however, that in the United Kingdom, the series was released quite differently. Story order varied, issues were heavily edited and mostly in black and white, and the Brits received several tales not offered in the United States.

From 1977 to 1987, Marvel crafted a saga set before, during, and after the trilogy's events. Marvel published a monthly U.S. series comprising three eras—*A New Hope* to *The Empire Strikes Back* (#1-38), *TESB* to *Return of the Jedi* (#39-80), and post-Jedi (#81-107)—as well as three annuals, a four-part *ROTJ* miniseries, 14 *Ewoks* issues, 8 *Droids* issues, two digests, two book-and-record adaptations with Buena Vista Records, and a 16-part strip serialized in *Pizzazz* magazine. Writers Roy Thomas, Archie Goodwin, David Michelinie, and Mary Jo Duffy crafted ongoing storylines, while guest scribes Chris Claremont, J. M. DeMatteis, Larry Hama, Mike W. Barr, future Dark Horse VP Randy Stradley, and others turned in filler stories. Howard Chaykin, Steve Leialoha, Tom Palmer, Carmine Infantino, Walt Simonson, Al Williamson, Ron Frenz, Cynthia Martin, and others handled art chores, including newcomers Jan Duursema and Michael Golden.

For American readers, the storyline had an organic flow from one creative team to the next. But for those in Britain, reading Marvel's *Star Wars* saga was an entirely different experience.

Star Wars Weekly

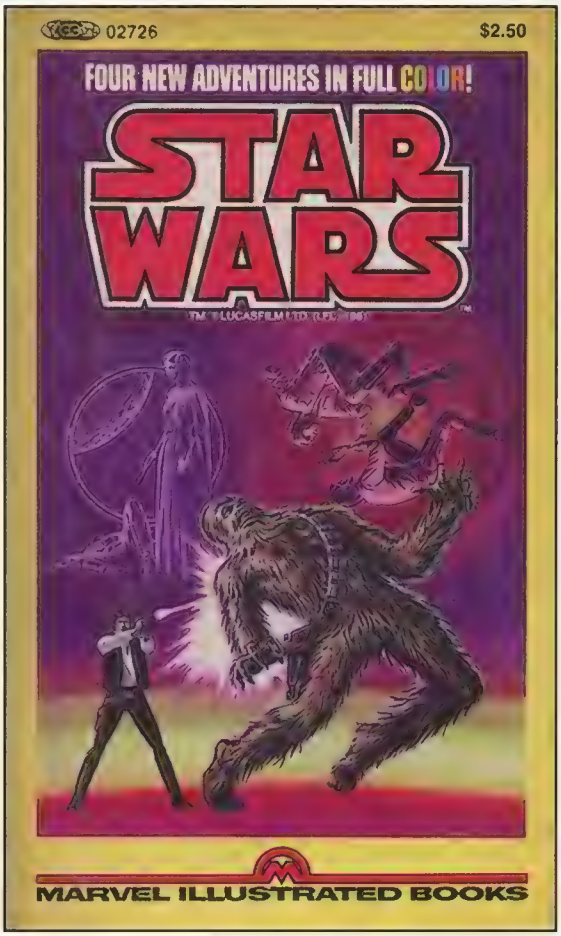
The first *Star Wars* film hit British theaters on December 27, 1977. Marvel UK's comic debuted the week of February 8, 1978, just under a yearafter U.S. readers' first issue, which bore a July 1977 cover date but was released on March 8. The U.K. comics reprinted American storylines, beginning with adapting *A New Hope*—but unlike the U.S. run, Marvel's British tenure began

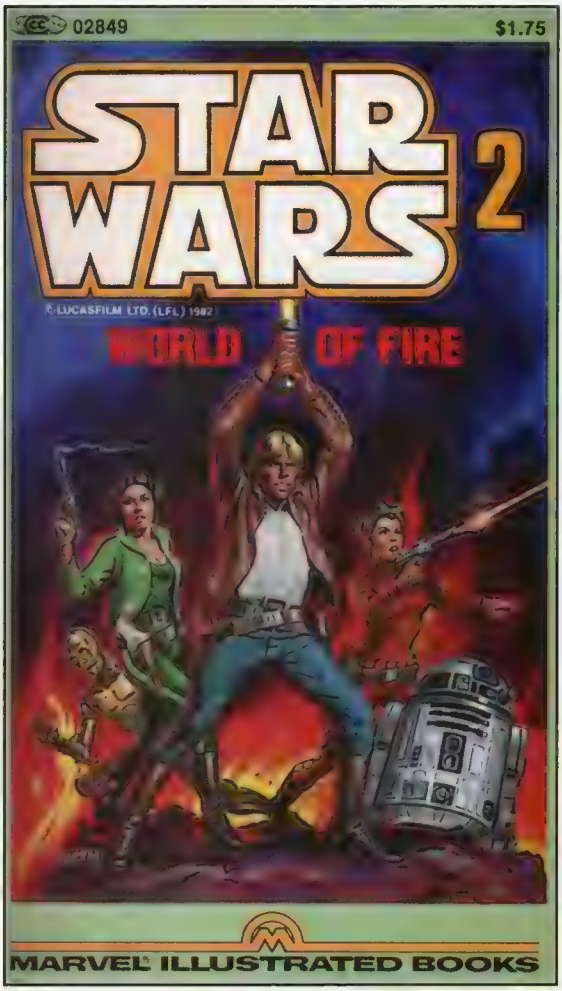
as a weekly publication before undergoing several name changes. *Star Wars Weekly*, as it was initially titled, lasted for 117 issues, repackaging the first 38 monthlies, first annual, and *Pizzazz*.

At the time, British comics were often anthologies featuring fiction based onvarious franchises and genres, from superheroes, adventure stories, and science fiction to children's cartoons, the supernatural, and supermarionation puppetry. Such titles included *2000AD, The Beano, Countdown, The Dandy, Eagle, Look-In, Planet of the Apes Weekly, Tiger, TV21, TV Comic, Valiant,* and many others. Marvel UK's *Star Wars* line followed this format, with a revolving lineup of non-*Star Wars* material—*Tales of the Watcher, Star-Lord, The Micronauts*, and more—published alongside the *Star Warriors*' adventures; editor Dez Skinn tried to incorporate *Battlestar Galactica* as well, but that idea was nixed. The series also offered behind-the-scenes feature articles, photographs, and pinups.

Because the comic ran monthly in the United States, adapting it to British format required that each issue be broken up into multiple chapters, and new covers be commissioned. Many tales were edited for U.K. release, with panels or entire pages reordered, resized, or removed. Since four or five British issues were released monthly but each U.S. issue spanned only two or three U.K. editions, the lag between American and overseas releasesrapidly decreased: *Star Wars Weekly* #1 appeared eleven months after America's *Star Wars* #1, whereas the story reprinted in *Star Wars Weekly* #30 ran only three months after its U.S. debut. By *Star Wars Weekly* #40, which reprinted U.S. issue #20, the British and American versions were running concurrently. Bottlenecks were inevitable. As a result, U.S. #21-25 appeared in Britain out of their original order, andexisting American material was soon exhausted.

Reprinting *Pizzazz*'s serial helped, but the reprieve was temporary, so Marvel assigned Goodwin to write additional tales. The first, "Pursuit" (in *Star Wars Weekly* #60), concluded the prematurely canceled





Pizzazz storyline. This was followed by two serialized tales in *Star Wars Weekly* #94-99, a third in #104-106, and a fourth in #107-115."Pursuit" and the first three serials ("Way of the Wookiee," "The Day After the Death Star," and "The Weapons Master") were collected for U.S. readers in a digest-sized Marvel Illustrated Book titled *Star Wars: Four New Adventures in Full Color*, while the fourth was packaged as *Star Wars 2: World of Fire*.

Some U.K. issues contained a "The Story So Far" page to bring readers up to date on the prior issue's events, while others used opening narrations by R2-D2 and C-3PO. What's more, nearly 90 pinups and posters were featured—the majority of which had never appeared in the American comics—drawn by numerous popular artists.

The Empire Strikes Back Weekly

Star Wars Weekly came to a close on May 21, 1980—*The Empire Strikes Back*'s theatrical release date—with issue #117, before re-launching the following week as *The Empire Strikes Back* Weekly. Continuing the previous series' numbering, *TESB* Weekly began with issue #118 (May 29, 1980) and lasted for 22 issues before undergoing another format change as of #139 (October 22, 1980). During this five-month incarnation, the magazine serialized Marvel's *Empire* adaptation over a span of eighteen issues, followed by the second of five *A New Hope* reprintings.

Concurrent with the latter was a serialization of American issue #48, "The Third Law." Since the *TESB* adaptation comprised U.S. issues #39-44, this meant the British editors had skipped over #45-47 and were no longer presenting the series according to its American chronology. Such would remain the case for the duration of the U.K. line, which no doubt confused British readers, given the series' tendency to jump from one era and creative team to another without warning—and sometimes without wrapping upthe preceding storyline.

The Empire Strikes Back Monthly

As of #140 (November 1980), *TESB* Weekly became a monthly title, and remained so for 19 issues. Like the weekly iteration, *TESB Monthly* reprinted multiple *Star Wars* tales per issue, with #140-147 concluding *A New Hope* (but oddly excluding the fourth chapter), while simultaneously reprinting the skipped-over #45-47, followed by #53-54, 49, and 51, in that order. The remaining stint jumped around the American series, presenting U.S. issues #52, 16, and 55-58.

Marvel's handling of U.S. #56-57 must have particularly perplexed Brits, as those issues, in which Lando Calrissian returned to Bespin to find the Ugnaughts rebelling and Lobot's cyborg brain sabotaged, were presented to U.K. readers in a bizarre fashion. *TESB Monthly* #154 contained the first half of U.S. #56, while #155 presented the first half of #57. Issues #156 and #157 then offered the second halves of each chapter. The result? A non-chronological mash-up in which effect nonsensically preceded cause—a sort of "*Star Wars* in the style of Lost" pastiche (ironically predating Lost creator

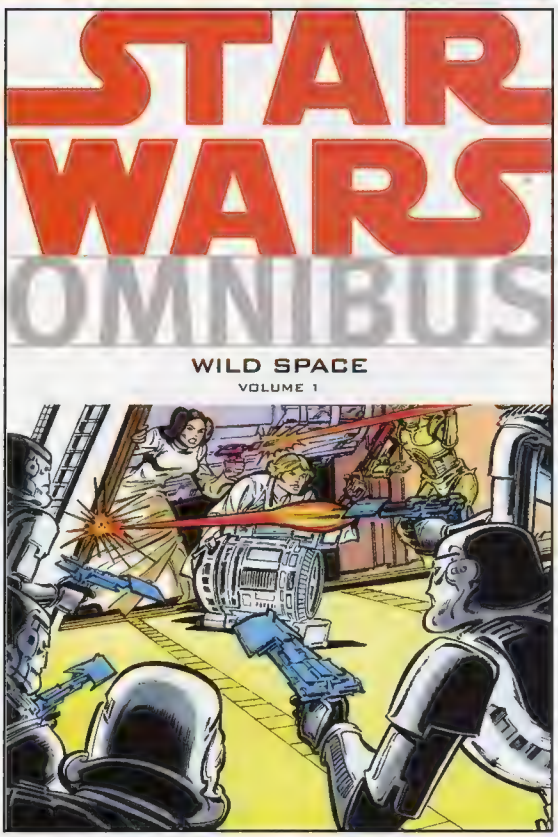
FWAAAASH!
SHALL WE CONTINUE THE GAME, MY LADY? IT WOULD APPEAR THAT YOUR POSITION IS COMPROMISED.
:CHIRRICK!: ER-- YOU LIVE UP TO YOUR REPUTATION, MY LORD.
BUT AS FOR THE GAME :CHIRRIK: I THINK I SEE AN AVENUE OF ESC--
NO, MY LADY. I DON'T NEED THE SHAMER'S POWER OF EMPATHY TO DISCERN YOUR ROLE IN LURING ME TO THIS PLACE.
NO, INDEED. YOUR POSITION IS FATALLY COMPROMISED.
SORCERER'S RING. FIRST STONE.
VHAUFF!
KLIK
HM.
A SCRAPPY, DISAPPOINTING OPENING, BUT THE ENDGAME PROVIDED SOME SATISFACTION.

J.J. Abrams' announcement as Episode VII's director by three decades).

Arguably, the most significant aspect occurred during *TESB*'s monthly incarnation. As had happened with *Star Wars Weekly*, the U.K. editors depleted their existing material and needed to commission new stories to fill in the gaps. Rather than having the regular writer pen more tales, Marvel brought in "Moore"authors—Alan and the late Steve Moore, to be exact.

Prior to penning such classics as *V for Vendetta*, *Watchmen*, *The Killing Joke*, *From Hell*, and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, as well as forever changing the Swamp Thing mythos, Alan Moore wrote a quintet of black-and-white *Star Wars* tales every bit as macabre. These gems illustrate that even as an up-and-coming young scribe, Moore possessed immense talent.

Moore's five tales—"The Pandora Effect," "Tilotny Throws a Shape," "Rust Never Sleeps," "Dark Lord's Conscience," and "Blind Fury"—were creepy, compelling, and among Marvel's best *Star Wars* lore. And yet, few Americans knew they existed until Dark Horse reprinted them years later, along with Steve Moore's "Dark Knight's Devilry" and Steve Parkhouse's "The Flight of the Falcon," as a colorized miniseries, Classic *Star Wars: Devilworlds*. The final page of "Dark Lord's Conscience," omitted in the British release, was restored in Devilworlds—but to Moore's credit, the tale's conclusion is equally effective either way. Another Steve Moore story, "Death-Masque,"



was excluded from Devilworlds, but was included with the other U.K. lore in Dark Horse's *Star Wars Omnibus: Wild Space*, Volume 1. (Despite being long-time friends, collaborators, and fellow occultists, the two Moores are unrelated.)

Also worth noting is *TESB Monthly* #141, which reprinted J.M. DeMatteis' "The Dreams of Cody Sunn-Childe," from U.S. #46. When published in the United States, the story's altered ending greatly changed DeMatteis' meaning. The original ending had Lando saddened by Cody's death without passing judgment on his pacifistic outlook, but editorial edict resulted in Lando instead condemning Cody's way of thinking—which was contrary to the Rebels' ideals—as "wrong." DeMatteis (who'd named the character after his son) requested that his name be replaced with a pseudonym, "Wally Lombego." Surprisingly, the British version retained the unaltered conclusion, allowing fans to experience the tale as DeMatteis had intended.

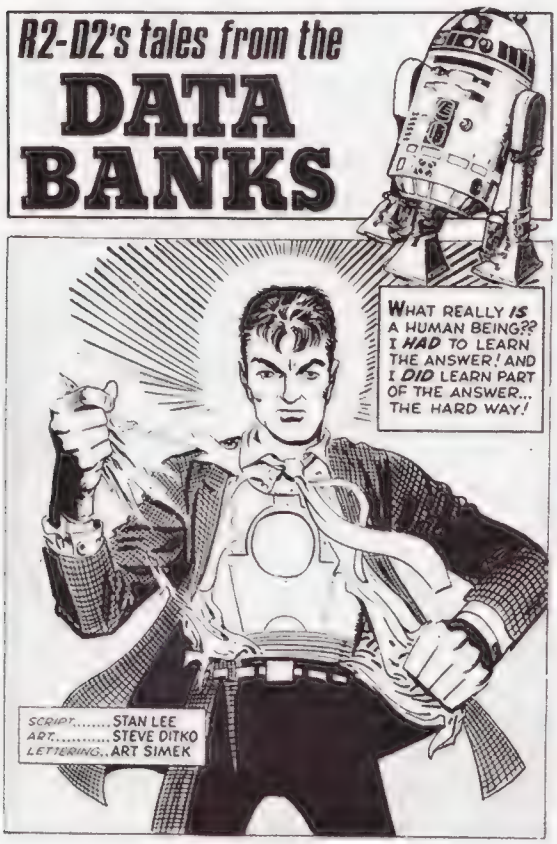
Stan Lee and Artoo's Astonishing Adventures

See-Threepio once claimed he was not good at telling stories. While that claim's validity may be debatable, given his Ewok fireside chat in *Return of the Jedi*, 3PO wasn't the franchise's real storyteller anyway—that distinction goes to Artoo-Detoo. Among its non-*Star Wars* content, *TESB Monthly* #140 and #144 reprinted a pair of stories by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko that had appeared two decades prior, in Marvel's sci-fi anthology *Tales to Astonish*. And in 1985, Marvel UK repackaged both as *Star Wars* content, retitled "R2-D2's Tales from the Data Banks" (in *ROTJ Weekly* #83 and the *Star Wars Summer Special*), with an image of Artoo prefacing each story.

The first tale,"Bronson's Brain," had debuted in April 1963, in *Tales to Astonish* #45. It featured Bruno Bronson, Earth's smartest, most arrogant man, who set out to find his intellectual equals in the stars, but ended

up caged in an extraterrestrial zoo by super-intelligent aliens who deemed him an idiot. The second, "I Am Not Human," appeared in January 1963, in *Tales to Astonish* #42, and told the tale of Robot E-1, a mechanoid whose creator often chided him that he would never be human. After seeing how horribly mankind treated him—and each other—E-1 realized no robot would want to be.

Both of Lee's scripts condemned humanity's weaknesses from an outsider's viewpoint. Whereas "Bronson's Brain" employed a Twilight Zone-style twist ending, "I Am Not Human," with its theme of droid discrimination, fit well with *Star Wars* (Earth-centricity aside). E-1, in fact, rather resembled C-3PO. Ralph McQuarrie's early aesthetic for Threepio had been influenced by Brigitte Helm's Maschinenmensch robot Maria, in Fritz Lang's 1927 film Metropolis; undoubtedly, E-1 was modeled after Maria as well.


R2-D2's tales from the
DATA BANKS
WHAT REALLY IS A HUMAN BEING?? I HAD TO LEARN THE ANSWER! AND I DID LEARN PART OF THE ANSWER... THE HARD WAY!
SCRIPT.....STAN LEE
ART.....STEVE DITKO
LETTERING...ART SIMEK

What's most astounding is the legendary team behind these stories. Lee co-created Spider-Man, the Hulk, the X-Men, the Fantastic Four, Iron Man, Thor, and other iconic characters, while Ditko co-created Spider-Man and Doctor Strange. That these two icons wrote and drew a pair of tales peripherally related to *Star Wars*—and for Marvel, no less—is often entirely overlooked.

Star Wars Monthly

Throughout the *Star Wars Weekly*, *TESB Weekly*, and *TESB Monthly* eras, the stories printed in several U.S. issues (including #24-37, 45-48, and 53-54) actually appeared in Britain before their American releases—in some cases, by as much as several months—due to the two headquarters' different publishing schedules. This problem was apparently resolved by July 1982, when the U.K. series underwent another name and format change.

Star Wars Monthly lasted a mere 13 issues (#159-171) and offered a straightforward

reprinting of U.S. issues #59-71—exactly 100 issues apart in numbering from the American versions—without breaking them up into multiple chapters. Other than a few edits to three issues, most stories appeared in the British series exactly as they had in the American version, albeit sans color.

Alan Moore's "Blind Fury" debuted in issue #159. Ten issues later, *Star Wars Monthly* featured a promotional contest produced by toy company Palitoy. The four-page leaflet contained an open-ended comic strip in which Luke Skywalker encountered a mysterious figure on Tatooine. Contest entrants were asked to imagine and draw the identity of the speaker (in retrospect, Emperor Palpatine), for a chance to attend a special viewing of the then-impending *Return of the Jedi*.

With the final issue of *Star Wars Monthly*, in July 1983, Marvel UK's foray into the galaxy far, far away came to an end—or, rather, its numbering scheme did. The comic continued for several more years, with a color format and a mix of photo and art covers. Numbering was reset to #1 in order to usher in *ROTJ*'s release and the reprinting of Jo Duffy's post-film tenure.

Return of the Jedi Weekly

After four name changes in five years, Marvel UK's *Star Wars* line began its fifth and final incarnation on June 22, 1983, with *Return of the Jedi Weekly* #1. This iteration continued until June 7, 1986, for a total of 155 issues—almost as many as the previous four tenures combined.

The series opened with a serialization of Marvel's *ROTJ* adaptation spread out over eight issues, followed by a third reprinting of *A New Hope* in #9-19, and a second helping of *TESB* in #51-64. Running alongside these adaptations were serialized reprints of other *Star Wars* tales, spanning as many as four to seven U.K. chapters per U.S. issue. It took the first nineteen editions of *ROTJ Weekly*, for example, to rerun U.S. issues #72-76. Moreover, issue #19 contained excerpts of three different American tales, for in addition to wrapping up U.S. #76 and *A New Hope*, it also began serializing U.S. #7 (featuring the infamous space-rabbit Jaxxon) for a second time.

Thus began an erratic publishing

schedule that would define *ROTJ Weekly*, with British readers concurrently following multiple (and randomly ordered) storylines from throughout the American run. U.K. issues #20-63 reprinted U.S. #77-85, simultaneous with double-dippings of U.S. #7-15 and #18-27. U.K. #64-95 presented U.S. #86-94, while also rerunning U.S. #46-47 and#50-55. The British series then serialized American issues #17 and #56 in U.K. #96-98, followed by U.S. #95-104 and #57-67 in U.K. #99-137, and then U.S. #50 and #67-69 in U.K. #138-143.

Confused, American readers? Now imagine how those in the United Kingdom, who actually read the series in that order back in the '80s, must have felt!

Rounding out *ROTJ Weekly*'s final editions were reprints of U.S. #70 and #105 in U.K. #144-147, with the last eight weeks once again repackaging the *ROTJ* film adaptation, alongside American issues #71-72. Throughout *ROTJ Weekly* (and, previously, in the first three *Star Wars Weekly* issues and *TESB* Weekly #118), fans received bonus content in the form of paper models, board games, hats, stickers, and more, some of which—such as an *Ewoks* board game—introduced newly created *Star Wars* creatures, species, and vessels never referenced outside of Marvel UK.

C.Y.R.I.L., THE ADVENTURES OF AN EDITOR-DROID

The British editors took a tongue-in-cheek approach to fan letters, particularly regarding reader-spotted errors. This led, starting in *Star Wars Weekly* #41, to a running joke that evolved into a recurring *Star Wars* droid character unique to the U.K. series.

After fan Costas Charitou chastised Marvel for erroneously dismissing his correction defining the term "TIE," the editor jokingly blamed the gaffe on faulty circuits in the company's computers, noting that they'd been replaced with a new computer called C.Y.R.I.L. (Class 'Y' Reader's Inquiry Logistical Computer), whom Marvel promised would do a better job than his predecessor of preventing editorial mistakes. ("He" didn't. Errors still crept in.)

Over time, C.Y.R.I.L. evolved from merely an editorial persona to a droid working at Marvel's offices—and even got his own backup strip. While visiting the publisher's British headquarters in 1984, Steve Parkhouse pitched a humorous serial about the hapless robot's misadventures. Thus spawned "C.Y.R.I.L. the Adventures of an Editor-Droid," which spanned 54 issues (in *ROTJ Weekly* #73-126), with jokes focused on the droid's frustration at being overworked and underappreciated. To date, these strips have never been reprinted.

Spider-Man and Zoids / Spidey Comic

As Marvel UK's regular *Star Wars* line came to a close, the third American annual, Jo Duffy's "The Apprentice," was serialized in a non-*Star Wars* magazine titled *Spider-Man and Zoids*. Broken up into eight chapters for issues #15-22, the story was reprinted in its entirety.

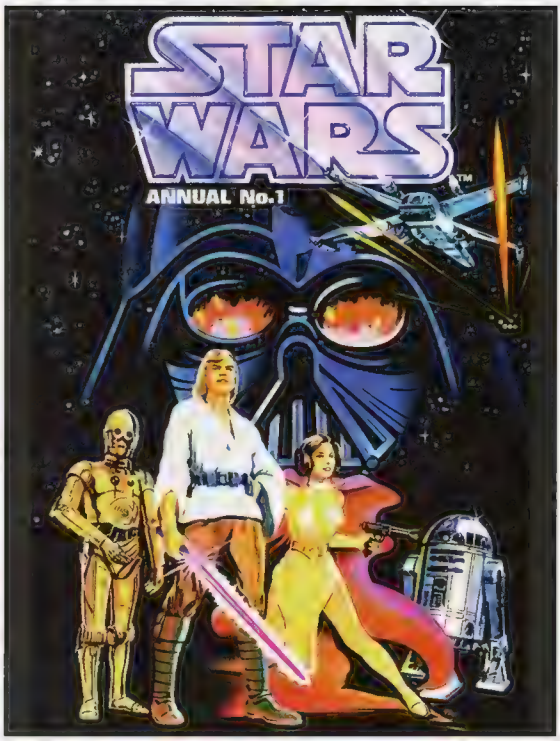
The *Zoids* franchise, created by Japanese toy manufacturer Tomy, initially focused on model kits but later expanded to include action figures, video games, anime, manga, and more. The series spun off a tie-in comic strip in the 1980s, in Marvel UK's *Secret Wars*, before joining with Spider-Man inits own weekly comic periodical, notable for featuring early work from Grant Morrison.

This was not the first team-up between the Rebels and the friendly neighborhood wall-crawler. Months prior, concurrent with *ROTJ Weekly* #125-130, *Spidey Comic*—another Spider-Man magazine, this time aimed at young children—had reprinted *Ewoks* #2-3 (from Marvel's Star Comics imprint) in issues #661-664 and #665-666, respectively. If you've never imagined Ewoks and Spider-Man co-starring in a publication together, you're probably not alone.

Ewoks Monthly / The Marvel Bumper Comic

In November 1987, Marvel UK returned to Endor's Forest Moon. Over the course of ten issues, *Ewoks Monthly* presented nine American tales, though in a random order—#9, 2, 7, 11, 5, 8, 4, 14, and 10—as well as *Droids* #4, the first of Star Comics' two-part *Ewoks*-Droids crossover. It's unclear why the stories were presented so haphazardly—particularly since *Ewoks* #2 had already run in *Spidey Comic*, while several other issues had yet to receive a reprinting.

Subsequently, four Droids tales were reprinted between April and June 1989, in issues #15-25 of *The Marvel Bumper Comic*, another non-*Star Wars* anthology. *Marvel Bumper* repackaged *Droids* #2, 5, and 4, in that order—and *Ewoks* #10. Once again, Marvel UK opted to reprint tales already repackaged (*Droids* #4 and *Ewoks* #10), rather than presenting the remaining issues. This time around, though, all *Ewoks* elements of the crossover were excised, creating a



Droids-only adventure in which R2 and 3PO skipped their visit to Endor.

Marvel Bumper #25 marked Marvel UK's final *Star Wars* publication. That the company was still publishing *Star Wars* titles as late as 1989 is intriguing, when one considers that Marvel's Epic Comics imprint had planned to publish Tom Veitch's *Dark Empire* miniseries—even advertising it in 1990's *Marvel Age Special Preview* #1—before Dark Horse picked up the license and that title.

Annuals, Specials, and Digests—Oh, My

Throughout its weekly and monthly runs, Marvel UK produced a number of additional *Star Wars* titles, including ten hardcover annuals, seven softcover specials, and two digest books. Four annuals (*Star Wars Annual No. 1*, the 1980 *TESB Annual*, the 1983 *ROTJ Annual*, and *Star Wars Special Edition*), as well asboth digests (Marvel Comics Illustrated Version of *Star Wars* and *TESB*—The Marvel Comics Version), repackaged the film adaptations in altered formats. Many panels and pages were omitted, while *TESB* was laid out differently than in the United States.

Most significantly, Yoda was drawn with purple skin and long white hair, due to the creative team having received concept illustrations of the enigmatic new Jedi Master. This was corrected in the U.S. adaptation, as well as in the *TESB* Weekly and *ROTJ Weekly* reprints, but not in either the *TESB* Annual or Special Edition.

Four other volumes (*Marvel Presents Star Wars Annual*, the simply named *Star Wars Annual*, *TESB Annual No. 2*, and the 1984 *ROTJ Annual*) collectively repackaged U.S. issues #13-14, 45-48, 50, 77, and 79-80. The most notable of this batch was the 1984 *ROTJ Annual*'s treatment of U.S. #79. The original American run included a scene in which Lando, during a high-speed chase, stopped to ask directions of a passing prostitute, who purposely sent him the wrong way. The entire three-page street-walker sequence was censored from the British version, presumably due to more stringent morality standards.

The final two books, *Star Wars Annual Featuring Ewoks* and *Ewoks Annual*, presented

issues from Star Comics' *Ewoks* series. The first volume included *Ewoks* #1 and, oddly, the third U.S. *Star Wars* annual (previously repackaged in *Spider-Man and Zoids*), while the second offered *Ewoks* #2 and 9—both of which had already been reprinted in *Ewoks Monthly*.

The most notable aspect of the second *Ewoks* annual was not what it reprinted, but what it also included: three original *Star Wars* prose stories. These tales ("Chief Chirpa Kidnapped," "Return of the Great One," and "The Ice Princess") have been all but forgotten by many fans, as they have never been republished in any medium.

In addition, the 1983 *Star Wars Summer Special* collected "The Flight of the Falcon," "Rust Never Sleeps," "The Pandora Effect," and "Death-Masque" (from *TESB Monthly* #157, 155, 151, and 149), with a cover-blurb promising "The Best of British Comic Strip" [sic]. The next four softcovers (the *ROTJ Winter Special, Christmas Special, and Summer Special,* as well as the *1985 Star Wars Summer Special*) presented American issues #17-18, 24, and 29, along with the first two U.S. annuals. *The Droids TV Special* and *Droids Spring Special,* meanwhile, reprinted issues #1 and 3 of Star Comics' *Droids* run.

Missing in Action

Although Marvel UK reprinted several-American stories two or three times, and a few even more often, eight chapters-somehow never made their way to the United Kingdom: U.S. monthly *Star Wars* issues #106 and 107—denying Brits access to the Nagai-Tof storyline's conclusion—as well as *Ewoks* #6, 12, and 13, and the *A New Hope* adaptation from *Droids* #6-8.

Moreover, while a number of British-exclusive tales were repackaged for Americans in *Four New Adventures* and *World of Fire*, eight others (the macabre Moore and Parkhouse stories from *TESB Monthly* and *Star Wars Monthly*) remained unavailable to U.S. readers for decades, until being collected in Dark Horse's *Devilworlds* and *Omnibus* series, with "Death-Masque" appearing only in the latter. "R2-D2's Tales from the Data Banks" has never been re-printed in its pseudo-*Star Wars* format, and neither have "C.Y.R.I.L., the Adventures of an Editor-Droid" or the three *Ewoks* prose stories—the only Marvel *Star Wars* offerings never published in the United States.

Including comics, annuals, specials, and digests, Marvel UK produced a whopping 380 *Star Wars* publications. A cover gallery is available at RebelScum. com, while a spreadsheet breaking down issue numbers, dates, titles, creators, British-to-American conversions, and a slew of notes, can be downloaded at: *hassleinbooks.com/pdfs/MarvelUK_SW.pdf*.

Reading the British series can be jarring for U.S. fans, given the frequent repetition, truncation, and erratic story order. And yet, it has much to offer, allowing classic tales to be viewed from an entirely new perspective. For collectors, tracking down every issue might be no easy feat, but with a bit of perseverance and patience—and, of course, the above spreadsheet—American fans can experience Marvel the way readers did a long time ago, in a nation not so far, far away.

THE PULL LIST
by James Kuhoric

My lifelong fascination with science fiction started pretty much the same way every kid's did in 1977, with *Star Wars*. As the images of a farm boy who would go on to become a Jedi Knight played out across the screen I was enamored with the strange aliens, incredible droids, and the irresistible draw of the lightsaber duel. And once *Star Wars* electrified the world the sci-fi genre was there to stay with movies like *Alien*, *Blade Runner*, and even *The Black Hole* all contributing to the general zeitgeist of the time. I enjoy the annual sci-fi issue of the magazine for some of the same reasons. It's a chance for us to look at the big names in the genre and see where 2014 is taking our shared imaginative fascination with space and the future. From new television to films to comics, we get to enjoy the best sci-fi in pop culture. And this month as we hurl toward summer like a smuggler's ship attempting to navigate an asteroid field, we get a close up look at the best science fiction that comics have to offer.

There are many great comics out there...but these are a few the most anticipated ones from my May and June wish list.

Big Trouble in Little China #1

"You know what ol' Jack Burton says at a time like this."

"Who?"

"Jack Burton. Me!"

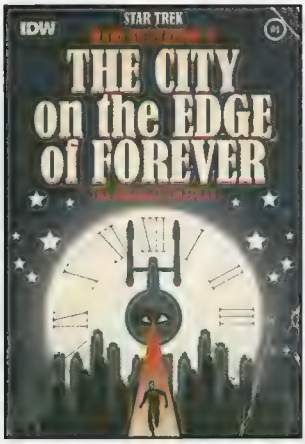
Yeah...anyone who can quote a goofy movie about a truck driving hero who gets caught up in a 1970s reminiscent kung fu mythological battle in Little China pretty much has no life. I admit that. But it doesn't change the fact that *Big Trouble In Little China* is one of those cult classics that you just can't pass up when it's on television no matter how many times you've seen it. It's the perfect blend of humor and

crazy action that just gets better with every viewing. And the fine folks at BOOM! not only brought this underappreciated classic to comics but they also found a way to get both Eric Powell and movie legend John Carpenter to create the new stories. Other companies may be satisfied to create mediocre adaptations of licensed comics but this one is as close as we could get to actually seeing more *Big Trouble* and I can't wait to see what they have in store. Bring on Lo Pan and have Egg fire up the big rig because ol' Jack Burton is back.

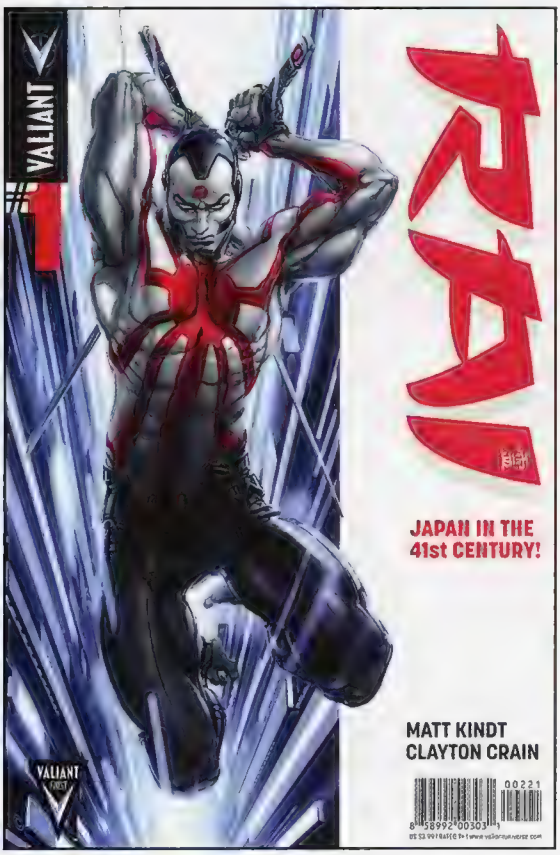
Love It: I was on board with Eric Powell, but adding John Carpenter to the mix is awesome.

Hate It: We all love the original, but is there enough magic left for one more adventure into Chinatown?

Honorable Mention (Sci-Fi Classics): *Star Trek Harlan Ellison's City on the Edge of Forever*– Is there another writer in



all of sci-fi who is as imaginative and opinionated as Harlan Ellison? I've been a fan of Ellison for as long as I can remember and seeing his original teleplay for this pivotal piece of Trek history is something I am really looking forward to!



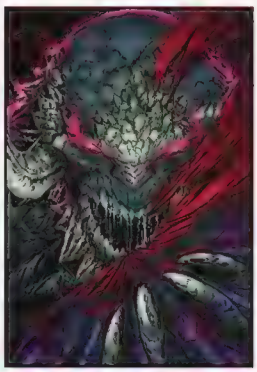
Rai #1

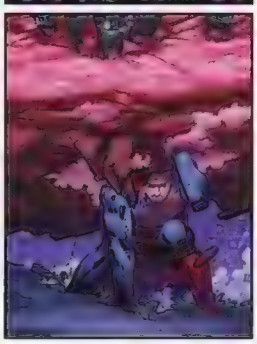
Just in time for sci-fi month, Valiant takes a trip into the future world of 4001 to introduce Rai to the readers. With Matt Kindt and Clayton Crain spinning the story of the Japanese folk hero and avenging spirit Rai, one thing is certain – this will not be what you are expecting. The people of Japan have moved to space and are enjoying a violence free thousand years until a murder breaks the peace. Now a ghost from the past has returned and must face the evolution of crime in a world that has moved beyond ancient ways. The painted artwork delivers an incredible vision of the future world and I'm excited to see what this new addition to the Valiant Universe has to offer.

Love It: You can't ask for a better creative team and a more unique vision for the reimagining of this character.

Hate It: I trust Kindt to deliver something unique, he has to. If this is just another "avenging spirit" there will be significant let down.

Honorable Mention (Superheroes):





Superman Doomed #1 / Superman #32- Different stories but both interesting projects from the world of Big Blue. Call me a sucker if you must, but I still care about the Superman vs. Doomsday battles. I'm very curious to see how it is handled in the New 52. And What can you say about John Romita Jr picking up the reins of *Superman*. He's one of the most influential comic artists of the past two decades and always manages to bring out the best in the characters he works on. And that Geoff Johns fella is pretty good too.

Clive Barker's Nightbreed #1

Clive Barker is the best horror writer, period. Sure you can make cases for some other folks but no one has ever unsettled me as a reader as much as Barker has managed in some of his stories. He just has a way of getting under your skin with the

creepiest imagery imaginable. Those of us who follow his work know about *Nightbreed* and how it was changed by the studio to make it more "relatable." It's the discontent of the Barker faithful that resulted in the cobbling together of the *Nightbreed Cabal Cut* which restores (as much as you can) Barker's original vision for the tale. And the thought of him coming back to the property to tell stories of the Nightbreed makes this so much more than just another licensed comic. This is a chance for fans to experience what the author originally intended for these unique characters and I can't wait to experience the horror.

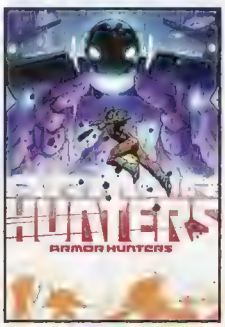
Love It: Clive Barker returns to *Nightbreed*. If this is half as good as the *Hellraiser* comics we are in for a morbid treat.

Hate It: Has the time passed for people to care about *Nightbreed* and its message? I don't think it has.

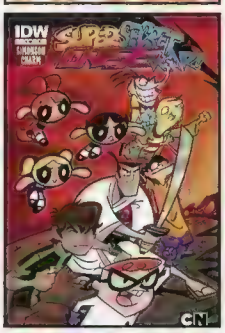
Honorable Mention (Horror): *Witchfinder: The Mysteries of Unland #1-*

Anything from the imagination of Mike Mignola tends to be a fun romp through dangerous waters. Add to that Bram Stoker Award winning author Kim Newman and you have a recipe for something delightfully dark. One part history influenced memoir and one part Mignolaverse monsterpiece makes this one hundred percent horror approved.

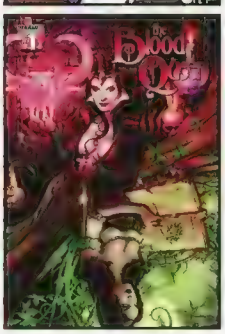
Those are the books I'm adding to my pull list this spring. Here are a few others I'll be watching out for as well:



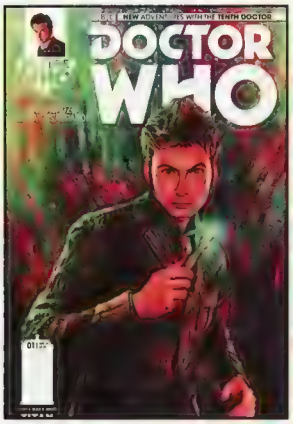
Armor Hunters #1– Space bounty hunters are out to destroy the X-O Manowar armor and anyone inside it? This couldn't be better if Boba Fett was on the hunt – sign me up!

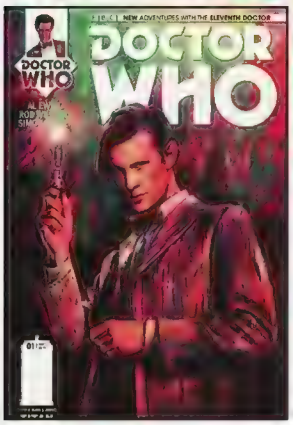


Super Secret Crisis War! #1– This is the ultimate Cartoon Network team up – Dexter, Ben 10, Samaria Jack, Ed, Edd, and Eddy, and the Powerpuff Girls all in one candy coated series.



The Blood Queen #1– It could just be that I'm mesmerized by the trailers for *Maleficent* with Angelina Jolie, but I think Dynamite's new *Blood Queen* series has some potential.





Batman 66 Meets Green Hornet #1– This is like Reese's Cups for comics – you got your peanut butter on my chocolate – Bam! Biff! Pow!

Doctor Who 10th / 11th Doctor– For every season there is a doctor, turn, turn…

MPH #1– Mark Millar and Duncan Fegredo tell the story of four inner city kids that get super speed. Something tells me they won't all fight crime…

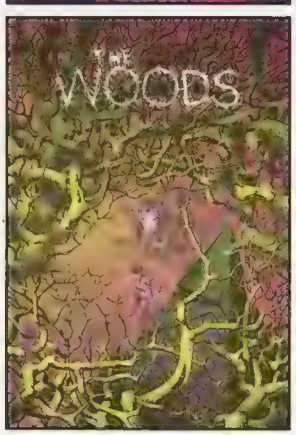
Outcast #1– Start your speculating ahead of the curve and order two.

Princess Ugg #1– When the creator of Courtney Crumrin develops a new series, you take note.

Vampirella #1– The sexiest vampire is back in a tale written by Bram Stoker Award winning author Nancy A Collins.

The Wicked & The Divine #1– The team behind the critically acclaimed *Phonogram* series take a turn telling stories of returned gods and pop stars.

The Woods #1– A Midwestern high school ends up in the middle of an alien forest…horror and hijinks ensue.



CHOMPER
W/SPIKEWEED
PLANTS VS. ZOMBIES
GARDEN
WARFARE
ENGINEER ZOMBIE
W/TURRET
GATLING PEASHOOTER
W/CHILI BEAN
SCIENTIST ZOMBIE
W/HEALING STATION
CAMO CACTUS
W/POTATO MINE
SOLDIER ZOMBIE
W/COMMANDO HEAD
SHADOW FLOWER
W/HEAL FLOWER
ALL-STAR ZOMBIE
W/IMP FAN
ACTION FIGURE TWO-PACKS
COMING SOON!
DIAMONDSELECTTOYS.COM
DIAMOND SELECT TOYS
diamondselecttoys.com
ART ASYLUM
artasylum.com
PopCap
EA
COMIC SHOP LOCATOR SERVICE
comicshoplocator.com
© 2014 Electronic Arts Inc. Plants vs. Zombies and PopCap are trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles is a trademark of Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles, LLC. © 2014 Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles. Art Asylum™, MINIMATES, and the Art Asylum Logo are trademarks of Diamond Select Toys and Collectibles. All Rights Reserved. Final product may vary.

VINTAGE PAPER CHASE

by Mark Seifert & William Christensen

The world celebrated Superman's 75th anniversary last year, but 2014 is arguably an even more important anniversary marker for comics – The first appearance of the Flash, the debut of *Marvel Comics*, and many more things that we'll be talking about both here and at bleedingcool.com throughout the year.

1939 truly was comics' golden year. It was the year that the rest of the business started to catch on to Superman's rapidly-climbing success, and it was the year, 75 years ago now, that Batman began.

Golden Age

Batman #1 and the so-called pre-Robin *Detective Comics* #27-37 have been on quite a tear for the last several years, so much so that many other early Batman appearances seem like a bargain by comparison. *Detective Comics* #40, the first Clayface and – somewhat controversially – usually considered the first Joker cover, is the perfect example of this. A key Batman book from mid-1940 (it hit newsstands the week after *Batman* #1) that can be had for low four figures is worthy of your attention. A CGC 5.0 recently turned heads at $2925, but that's probably still a bargain.

World's Finest Comics #3, the first appearance of the Scarecrow, is an even bigger bargain. No matter how you feel about those whimsical early *World's Finest* covers, an important Batman-related 1941 key that can be had for around a grand in mid-grade is a very good deal. A very pretty raw fine copy went for $1125 last month.

Silver Age

You'd think that Silver Age Batman keys would be well-mined territory by now, there are many popular issues from throughout the Silver Age that have been singled out by collectors for decades. We've mentioned a few here in *Vintage Paper* such as *Batman* #121 and *Detective Comics* #359.

But impossibly, there are still Batman Silver Age keys out there being overlooked. Case in point today is *Detective Comics* #235, a story that expands the Batman origin tale considerably, written by Batman co-creator Bill Finger 17 years after he and Bob Kane defined the character.

Many consider *Detective Comics* #225, the first appearance of the Martian

Manhunter in the back-up story, as an important precursor to the DC Silver Age. This is going to universally be considered a bold statement, but *Detective Comics* #235 is arguably just as important, and hitting the stands just six months after the birth of the Silver Age in *Showcase* #4, fits neatly into the concept of a DC re-defining its important heroes for a new generation of readers by adding a layer of complexity to the origin story with elements that have been borrowed from frequently in the decades since.

Copies of this book are almost silly cheap right now. Raw VG-range copies go for around $100-150, while copies in the VF range run about $1000-1500. As is typical for early Silver Age DC, CGC census numbers are extremely low.

Bronze Age

As with the earlier eras, the Bronze Age has no shortage of well-known and sought after Batman keys. Fans focus on Neal Adams' and Denny O'Neil's contribution to the mythos in this area, with books such as *Batman* #232 (first Ra's Al Ghul) and *Detective Comics* #400 (first Man-Bat) on every Batman collector's list. And amazingly, *Batman* #227, based on its classic Adams cover alone, is the most expensive of the lot with a CGC 9.8 copy going for $4183 recently.

So let's dig into something a little off the beaten path, as we did in the Silver Age. Take a look at *Swamp Thing* #7 – a Batman crossover tale by another important Bronze Age era team in Len Wein and Bernie Wrightson. In addition to that wonderful cover, it adds a single, specific element to the Batman mythos that has since become famous: you know how Batman always disappears into the night after meeting with Commissioner Gordon? That starts here. Not the most important thing in the world, perhaps, but with much of the Adams/O'Neil material running from several hundred to a few thousand in high grade, I'll make a $100-200 bet that some of those 70s-era Batman die-hards are going to want to soak up the atmosphere in this one eventually.

The Future Of Vintage Paper

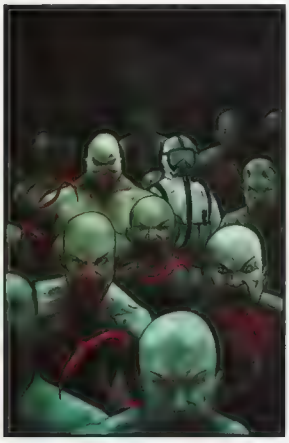
Do you know of any vintage comic sales of note? Are you an experienced dealer or collector who wants to contribute info? Let us know at: *vintage-paper@bleedingcool.com*.

HOT COMICS
By Rich Johnston

Here are a few of the hottest comic books right now – and ones we think may have future hotness potential. Do remember though that most comics do not go up in value. But if you get lucky, you might find that one or two of your comics could be able to fund, well, buying more comics.

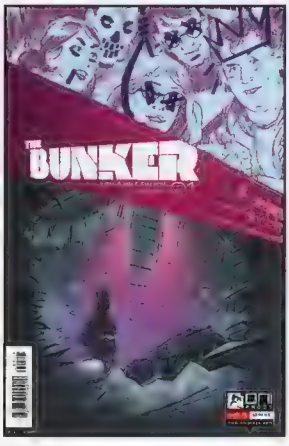
Right now it's all about the television. We've seen a bunch of comics announced as being optioned, getting a pilot, getting a TV-or-equivalent series promised, and the speculators have been jumping in. Did you pick up any of these?

Dark Horse's *The Strain*, which from the start was based on an unmade TV show, is



now looking like it will be a TV show, with Guillermo Del Toro's name helping smooth the process. Issue 1 ungraded sells for $40 without a problem with its variant fetching $90 and a CGC 9.8 jumping from $100 in February to $400 in March. Subsequent raw issues also go for $10 to $20 a piece.

Bleeding Cool was rather excited by the release of *Bunker* from Oni Press – and rather



disappointed by its sales. This seems to have been borne out by the speculator market, which has seen the restricted ComicsPro variant selling for $90, the normal Francesco Francavilla variant selling around $20 - $30, and the standard cover for up to $17, after the TV development announcement. Will the same happen to Fialkov's new Oni book, *A Life Apart*?

Sheltered #1 from Image Comics, with a recent TV connection to its name,

has seen issue 1 at CGC 9.8 selling for over $120, with retailer variants like Yesteryear selling for $170 in the same slabbed condition and up to $26 raw.

DMZ from DC/Vertigo was also announced as having a deal with Syfy, with *Mad Men*'s Andre and Maria Jacquemetton producing, has seen issue 1 jump from the quarter bins to $150 with a 9.8 CGC slab, or $40 raw.

It joins Vertigo stable-mate *iZombie* in that league, with the Darwyn Cooke variant #1 selling for $70 and the raw standard #1 selling for $30. However its first appearance as a short story from *House Of Mystery Hallowe'en Annual* is selling for $40 – and that's probably the one to dig out.

And we've talked plenty about *Preacher*.

With news of the Netflix Marvel TV series, *Alias* is also a speculator favourite, with *Alias* #1 9.8 CGC selling for $90 or raw for $25.

And with the Brian Bendis influence (including a nice credit on the *Winter Soldier* credits) will they be able to resist bringing Echo into Daredevil? Issue 9, her first appearance is about $5 on eBay right now.

Another book to get the TV nod is *Red Star*. Its ½ issue from Wizard is selling for $65,and issue 1 going for $10.

But there are bigger screens to think about too. *Captain America; The Winter Soldier* has had a massive effect, and may indicate more films to come.

As of the time of writing, weeks ahead of the official US release, issue 1 of the fifth volume of *Captain America* from 2006 sells for $141 in CGC 9.8 and $20 in raw. But it's the later revelatory appearance of The Winter Soldier from in issue 6 has sold for $200 in 9.8 CGC and around $45 in raw, for either Captain America or Winter Soldier covers. #14 tells his origin story and is selling for $26 raw too.

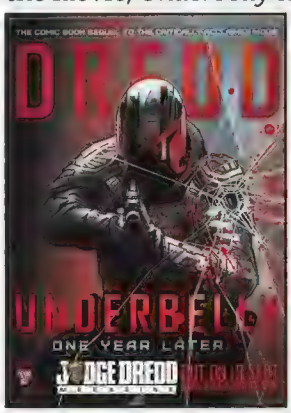
Doctor Strange got quite the prominent mention in *Captain America; The Winter Soldier*, which only emphasises the likelihood of a Doctor Strange movie to come. So *Strange Tales* #110 which featured his first appearance has to be a boon. Indeed, knowing the tendency to feature a hero's biggest foe, you might also want to keep an eye on *Strange Tales* #126 which has the first appearance of Dormammu, who Doctor Strange would go on to fight. Or if it's Mephisto, then look for *Silver Surfer* #3...

And, yes, Arnim Zola was in *Winter Soldier* so it's game on. *Captain America* #208 is already at $30 raw.

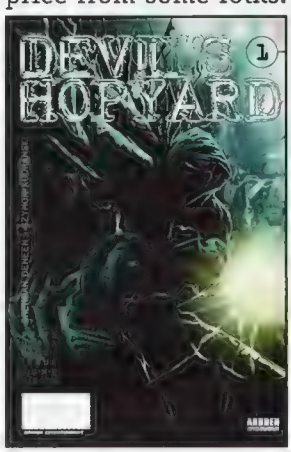
Also depending how big of a hit Patton Oswalt is as Eric Koenig, then his first appearance in *Sgt. Fury and his Howling Commandos* #27 might be worth a peek, currently selling for under $5.

But not every comic needs multi-media attention. *Manifest Destiny* from Image looks criminally under-ordered with issue 1 going for $10 but the first four issues grabbing $70.

And Judge Dredd has the opposite of multimedia attention – we know there is no movie sequel, but the comic book sequel to the movie, *Underbelly* has been selling for up to $45, and more sequels to be planned for 2014 should keep it prominent.



Devil's Hopyard has been a big surprise from Ardden Entertainment, featuring new work from Spawn artist Szymon Kudranks selling up to $11, but still available at cover price from some folks.

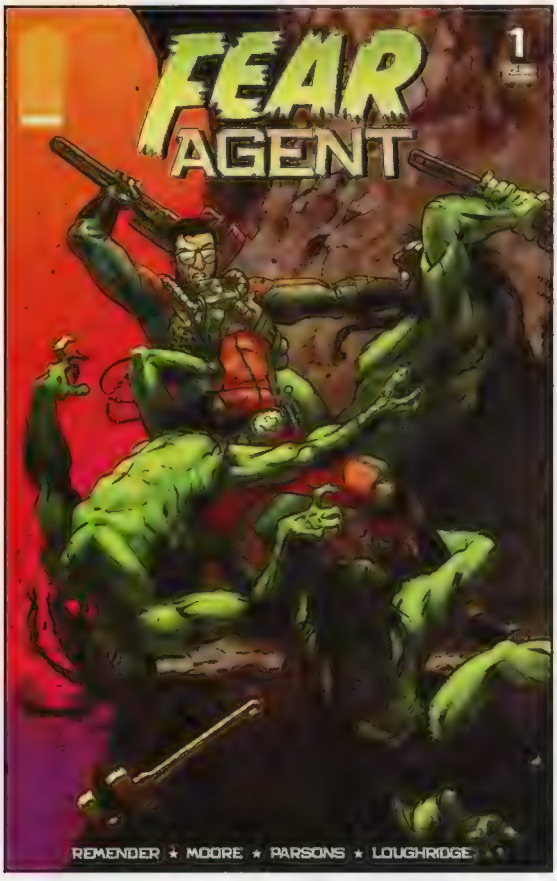


Its first appearance years ago in Dark Horse's *Scatterbrain* has hoisted sales to $15 each. Definitely worth bin diving for this one.

Just don't get too stinky in there.

PRICE GUIDE
for Collectors and Sellers

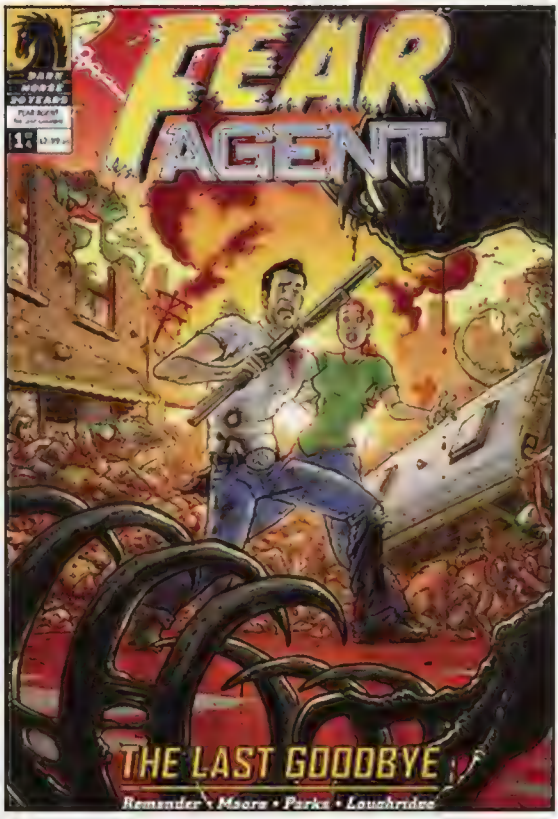
Welcome to the Bleeding Cool Price Guide. This is a snippet of the kind of prices comics are selling for on the open market. Rich Johnston scoured the web and thousands of online auction listings to provide this snapshot of comic book sales. A price listed here is no guarantee you'll be able to sell yours for that price, but it might give you an idea of what someone, somewhere, is willing to pay! Retailers who would like to become part of an advisory board for the Price Guide feature should contact Jim Kuhoric via email: *jimkuhoric@bleedingcool.com*



FEAR AGENT - Image/Dark Horse

Image

#1	RRP Limited Edition	$35
#1		$9
#2		$3
#3		$12
#9		$7
#10		$8



Dark Horse

#22	Sketch Cover	$4
#27		$3
#28		$4
#30		$3
DH The Last Goodbye		
#1	Frank Cho Variant	$5

SAGA - Image

#1	Diamond Variant	$499
#1	Cover A CGC 9.8	$209
#1	Cover A	$200
#2	CGC 9.8	$70
#3	CGC 9.8	$75
#4	CGC 9.8	$55
#5	CGC 9.8	$83
#6	CGC 9.8	$94
#7	Ghost Variant CGC 9.8	$55
#8	CGC 9.8	$73
#9	CGC 9.8	$56
#10	CGC 9.8	$50
#11	CGC 9.8	$51
#12	CGC 9.8	$50
#13	CGC 9.8	$50
#14	CGC 9.8	$35
#15	CGC 9.8	$40
#16	CGC 9.8	$50

#17	CGC 9.8	$180
#18	CGC 9.8	$60

BLACK SCIENCE - Image

#1	Image Expo Edition CGC 9.9	$230
#1	CGC 9.8	$100
#1	Ghost Variant CGC 9.8	$90
#1	Variant CGC 9.8	$66
#2	Variant CGC 9.8	$70
#2	CGC 9.8	$50
#3		$10
#4		$4

SERENITY - Dark Horse

Better Days

#1	Wraparound Variant CGC 9.8	$100
#1	Wraparound variant	$56
#1	Sketch Variant	$28
#1	Standard	$8

Those Left Behind

#1	Nathan Fillion	$12
#1	Adam Baldwin CGC 9.8	$65
#1	Adam Baldwin	$15
#1	Inara	$10
#2	Kaylee CGC 9.8	$55
#2	Kaylee	$48
#2	Ron Glass/Book	$16
#2	Zoe	$10
#3	River	$22
#3	Alan Tudyk	$17
#3	Sean Maher	$15

Leaves On The Wind

#1	Emerald City Variant	$52
#1	Acme Comics Noir	$25
#1	Ghost Variant	$12

Float Out

#1	Cover A	$13
#1	Cover B	$15

Free Comic Book Day

#1		$18

ELEPHANTMEN - Hip Flask

#3		$5
#5		$6
#7		$5
#12		$5
#17		$8
#18	J Scott Campbell Cover	$65
#19	Ian Churchill B&W Sketch	$50
#21		$8

#22		$8
#26		$11
#30	J Scott Campbell Cover	$21
#50	Frank Quietly Variant	$10
Giant Sized #1	J Scott Campbell Cover	$15

ALIENS - Dark Horse

Aliens

#1	Bisley Cover CGC 9.8	$90
#1	Platinum Edition CGC 9.8	$54

Aliens Vs Predator

#0	CGC 9.6	$90
#1	Platinum Edition CGC 9.8	$44

Batman Vs Aliens

#1		$15
#2		$15

Green Lantern Vs Aliens

#1		$7

DOCTOR WHO - IDW

Prisoners Of Time

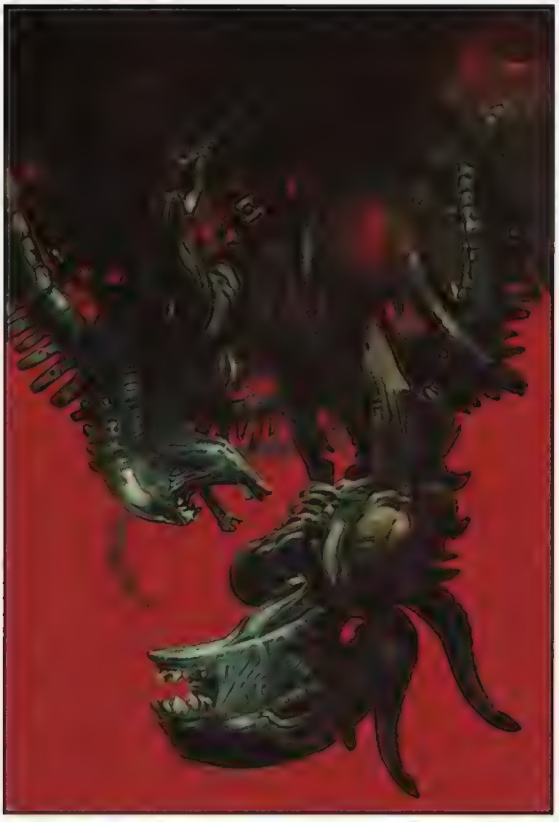
#1	1st Doctor Photo Variant	$200
#1	Dynamic Forces Edition	$50
#2	2nd Doctor Photo Variant	$45
#3	Photo Variant	$30
#4	Photo Variant	$30
#4	Ottawa Con Exclusive	$270
#5	Photo Variant	$30
#6	Photo Variant	$30
#7	Photo Variant	$125
#8	Photo Variant	$30
#9	Photo Variant	$30
#10	Photo Variant	$18
#11	Photo Variant	$15
#12	Variant	$30
#13	Hot Topics Variant	$31

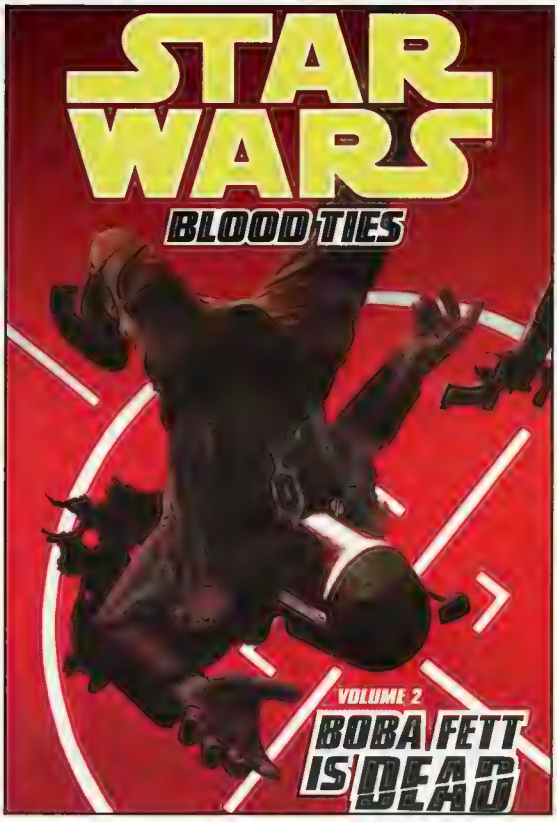
Star Trek/Doctor Who

#1	Photo Variant	$60
#1	Forbidden Planet Variant	$34
#1	Hastings	$30
#1		$58
#2	Retailer Incentive	$31
#2	Photo Variant	$19

THINK TANK - Top Cow

#1	CGC 9.8	$60
#1		$25
#2	CGC 9.8	$33
#5	Photo Cover CGC 9.8	$51





Military Dossier

#1	Vanity Edition	$10

STAR WARS - Dark Horse

Star Wars: Dark Empire (1991) Limited Series

#1		$12
#1	(99 Preview)	$6
#1	(2nd print)	$6
#2		$10
#2	(2nd print)	$5
#3		$7
#3	(2nd print)	$5
#4-6		$5

Star Wars: Dark Empire II (1994) Limited Series

#1-6	$6

Dark Horse Comics (1992)

#7-9	$6

Star Wars: Droids (1994) Limited Series

#1	$5
#2-6	$4
Special #1	$4

Star Wars Droids (1995) Limited Series

#1-8	$4

San Diego Comic Con 4 (1995)

$15

Star Wars: Boba Fett (1995) Limited Series

#1-3	$5

Star Wars: Boba Fett Enemy Of The Empire Limited Series

#1-4	$4

Star Wars: Jabba The Hutt (1995) One Shots

The Dynasty Trap	$4
The Gaar Suppoon Hit	$4
The Hunger Of Princess Nampi	$4

Star Wars: Tales From Mos Eisley (1996)

One Shot	$4

Star Wars: Mara Jade (1998) Limited Series

#1-6	$4

Star Wars: Splinter Of The Minds Eye (1998) Limited Series

#1-6	$4

Star Wars: Mara Jade By The Emperors Hand (1999)

One Shot		$4

Star Wars: Vaders Quest (1999) Limited Series

#1-4		$4

Star Wars: Union Limited Series

#1-4		$4

Star Wars: The Bounty Hunters (1999) One Shots

Aura Sing		$6
Kerix Kit		$6
Scoundrel's Wages		$6

Sergio Aragones Stomps Star Wars (2000)

One Shot		$5

Star Wars: Chewbacca (2000) Limited Series

#1-4		$4

Star Wars: Darth Maul (2000) Limited Series

#1	Photo Cover	$5

Star Wars: Jango Fett (2002)

One Shot		$8

Star Wars: Zam Wessel (2002)

One Shot		$8

Star Wars: Toys R Us Exclusive (2002)

#1-4		$6

Star Wars: Jedi One Shots (2003)

Aayla Secura		$10
Count Dooku		$11
Mace Windu		$9
Shaak Ti		$10
Yoda		$11

Star Wars: A Valentine Story (2003)

One Shot		$5

Star Wars: General Grevious (2003) Limited Series

#1-4		$4

Star Wars: Halloween Mini Comic (2009)

		$3

Free Comic Book Day 2009 Clone Wars

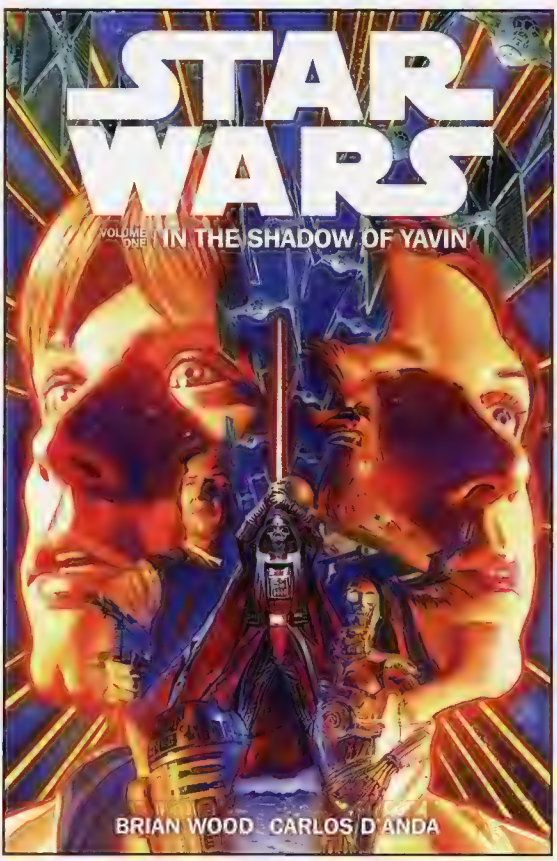
#0		$3

Star Wars (2013)

#1		$17
#1	Hastings Variant	$7
#1	(2Nd Pint)	$4
#1	(3Rd Print)	$4
#1	(4Th Print)	$4
#1	One For One Edition	$2
#2		$5
#3		$4
#7	San Diego Comic Con	$6

The Star Wars (2013)

#0		$5
#1	Jan Duursema Variant	$13
#1	Doug Wheatley Variant	$19
#1	Midtown Comics Variant	$10
#1	Forbidden Planet Variant	$20
#1	TFAW Variant	$5
#1	NYCC 2013 Variant	$20
#2	Ralph McQuarrie Variant	$18



**Star Wars Price Research By Ernest Votto*

BLEEDING COOL DIRECTORY
Retailer List

United States & Territories

- Bob's Comics: Birmingham, AL
- Deep Comics & Collectibles: Huntsville, AL
- Arkham Comics: Blytheville, AR
- Kapow! Comics: Sherwood, AR
- Drawn To Comics: Glendale, AZ
- Jesse James Comics & Collectibles: Glendale, AZ
- All About Books & Comics: Phoenix, AZ
- Samurai Comics: Phoenix, AZ
- Metropolis Comics: Bellflower, CA
- Fantastic Comics : Berkley, CA
- Collectors Ink: Chico, CA
- Comic Madness: Chino, CA
- Flying Colors Comics : Concord, CA
- Comics-n-stuff: El Cajon, CA
- Super Heroes In Training: Escondido, CA
- I.E. Comics And Games: Hemet, CA
- Meltdown Comics & Collectibles: Los Angeles, CA
- The Comic Bug: Manhattan Beach, CA
- Bonanza Books & Comics: Modesto, CA
- A Shop Called Quest: Redlands, CA
- Comickaze: San Diego, CA
- Yesteryear Comics: San Diego, CA
- Earth-2 Comics: Sherman Oaks, CA
- D J's Universal Comics: Studio City, CA
- Comics Toons 'n' Toys: Tustin, CA
- Collector's Paradise: Winnetka, CA
- *Mile High Comics: Denver, CO*
- I Want More Comics: Northglenn, CO
- Rogue Comics: Bridgeport, CT
- Legends Of Superheros: Middlebury, CT
- Superior Comics: Dover, DE
- The Comic Book Shop: Wilmington, DE
- Black Hive Comics And More: Jacksonville, FL
- Macs Comics & Collectibles: Miami, FL
- Coliseum Of Comics: Orlando, FL
- Korka Comics: Pembroke Pines, FL
- Famous Faces & Funnies: West Melbourne, FL
- Past Present Future Comics & Games: West Palm Beach, FL
- Oxford Comics: Atlanta, GA
- Dr. No's: Marietta, GA
- Randyland Gaming: Newnan, GA
- Gecko Books & Comics: Honolulu, HI
- The Core: Cedar Falls, IA
- Dreamland Comics: Bartlett, IL
- Alternate Reality, Inc.: Chicago, IL
- Chicago Comics: Chicago, IL
- G-mart: Chicago, IL
- Amazing Fantasy Comic Shop: Frankfort, IL
- Have Fun Collectibles: Moline, IL
- *Graham Crackers: Naperville, IL*
- Beyond Tomorrow: Palatine, IL
- Mellow Blue Planet: Rock Island, IL
- Comic Service: Springfield, IL
- *Discount Comic Book Service: Fort Wayne, IN*
- Hometown Comics: Greenfield, IN
- Creative Comics: Griffith, IN
- Comic Carnival: Indianapolis, IN
- Prairie Dog Comics: Wichita, KS
- Comic Book World: Florence, KY
- The Great Escape : Louisville, KY
- Comic Vault: Radcliff, KY
- Little Monster Comics: Somerset, KY
- Louisiana Double Play: Baton Rouge, LA
- Heavyink.Com: Arlington, MA
- Friendly Neighborhood Comics: Bellingham, MA
- *Newbury Comics: Brighton, MA*
- *New England Comics: Brockton, MA*
- Harrison's Comics & Pop Culture: Woburn, MA
- Galaxy Comics & Collectables: Winnipeg, MB
- Capital Comics: Annapolis, MD
- Third Eye Comics: Annapolis, MD
- Beyond Comics: Gaithersburg, MD
- Collectors Corner: Parkville, MD
- Green Brain Comics: Dearborn, MI
- Comix Corner: Fraser, MI
- Nostalgia Ink: Jackson, MI
- J R S Enterprises Inc: Livonia, MI
- Source Comics & Games: Roseville, MN
- Rock Bottom Books: Columbia, MO
- Newcastle Comics & Games: Maryland Hgts, MO
- Fantasy Shop : St Charles, MO
- Carolina Comics: Chapel Hill, NC
- Atomic Empire: Durham, NC
- Acme Comics: Greensboro, NC
- Classic Comics: Lewisville, NC
- Capital Comics Of Raleigh: Raleigh, NC
- Ssalefish Comics: Winston Salem, NC
- Action Jackson Comics: Bismarck, ND
- Juke Joint Comics: Bismark, ND
- Stairway To Heaven Comics: Exeter, NH
- Neon Bomb: Hooksett, NH
- Double Midnight Comics & Collectibles: Manchester, NH
- Merrymac Games And Comics: Merrick, NH
- Conquest Comic: Bayville, NJ

- Dewey's Comic City: Madison, NJ
- A & S Comics: North Bergen, NJ
- Comic Explosion: Nutley, NJ
- Comics Plus: Oakhurst, NJ
- Little Shop Of Comics & Cards: Scotch Plains, NJ
- Zapp Comics & Cards: Wayne, NJ
- Stormwatch Comics: West Berlin, NJ
- Frankenstein Comics: Woodbury, NJ
- Earthworld Comics: Albany, NY
- Queen City Bookstore: Buffalo, NY
- Blu Planet Entertainment: Massapequa, NY
- The Comix Zone: N. Syracuse, NY
- Forbidden Planet: New York, NY
- *Midtown Comics: New York, NY*
- Comix Warehouse: Pearl River, NY
- All Heroes: Rochester, NY
- Alterniverse: Salt Point, NY
- Fourth World Comics: Smithtown, NY
- The Spider's Web: Yonkers, NY
- Rockin' Rooster: Cincinnati, OH
- Cleveland Comics: Lyndhurst, OH
- Speeding Bullet Books & Comics: Norman, OK
- Comic Empire Of Tulsa: Tulsa, OK
- Impulse Creations: Tulsa, OK
- Things From Another World: Milwaukie, OR
- Excalibur Books And Comics: Portland, OR
- The Encounter: Allentown, PA
- Fatman Comics & Games: Athens, PA
- New Dimension Comics: Cranberry Twnsp, PA
- Sackers Collectibles: Easton, PA
- Comic Collection: Feasterville, PA
- Wade's Comic Madness: Levittown, PA
- Fat Jack's Comicrypt: Philadelphia, PA
- Ontario Street Comics: Philadelphia, PA
- America's Most Wanted Collectibles: Williamsport, PA
- Comix Connection: York, PA
- Apocalypse Comics : N Myrtle Beach, SC
- Comics Exchange: Knoxville, TN
- Lone Star: Arlington, TX
- Wild West Comics & Games: Arlington, TX
- Dragons Lair Comics & Fantasy: Austin, TX
- Texas Toyz: Corpus Christi, TX
- Third Planet: Houston, TX
- Comicastle: Pharr, TX
- Alien Worlds: San Antonio, TX
- Heroes & Fantasies: San Antonio, TX
- M & M Comic Service: San Antonio, TX
- Bankstons: Waco, TX
- Night Flight: Salt Lake City, UT
- Atlas Comics: Charlottesville, VA
- Victory Comics Group: Falls Church, VA
- Stories Comics: Henrico, VA
- Phoenix Comics & Toys: Lansdowne, VA
- Untamed Worlds: Lynchburg, VA
- The Trilogy Shop: Virginia Beach, VA
- Four Color Fantasies: Winchester, VA
- Painted Visions Comics & Cards: Woodbridge, VA
- Ambrosia Sports And Comics: Bothell, WA
- Docking Bay 93: Mt Vernon, WA
- Adventures Underground: Richland, WA
- Rockheads Comics & Games: Kenosha, WI
- *The Westfield Company: Middleton, WI*

Canada

- Baby Love Products: Camrose, AB
- Warp 1 Comics & Games: Edmonton, AB
- Wizards Comics & Collectibles: Edmonton, AB
- Amazing Fantasy Comics & Books: Red Deer, AB
- Reads Comics: Moncton, NB
- Jacks On Queen: Elmvale, ON
- B.A.'s Comics & Nostalgia: London, ON
- Gotham Central Comics & Collectibles: Mississauga, ON
- Image Collections: Mississauga, ON
- Red Nails Ii: Toronto, ON
- The Beguiling: Toronto, ON
- Paper Heroes: Windsor, ON
- Rogues Gallery Comics: Windsor, ON
- La Boite A B D De Laval Inc.: Laval, QC
- Distribution Universe: St. Laurent, QC
- 8th Street Books & Comics : Saskatoon, SK

United Kingdom

- Nostalgia And Comics: Birmingham, UK
- Excelsior Comics Limited: Bristol, UK
- Imagination Station: Carlise, UK
- Chester Comic Company: Chester, UK
- Ace Comics: Colchester, UK
- A Place In Space: Croydon, UK
- Paradox: Dorset, UK
- Red Hot Comics: Glasgow, UK
- Forbidden Planet: London, UK
- Gosh! The London Comic Shop: London, UK
- Orbital Comics: London, UK
- Whatever Comics: London, UK
- Comics N Toys: Worcestershire, UK

International

- Ace Comics & Games: Annerley QLD, Austraila
- Kings Comics: Sydney NSW, Austraila
- Black Dog Comics Ohg: Berlin, Germany
- Hade Gmbh: Osnabruck, Germany
- Books Of Magic: Wuppertal, Germany
- Panini Spa: Modena, Italy

BLEEDING COOL

BCM #10 Credits

All images are © their respective rights holders.

Cover: Prometheus/Alien TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved.

p1 Walter Simonson's Ragnarok TM & ©2014 Walter Simonson & IDW Publishing.

p2-3 Photograph supplied by Rich Johnston. Before Watchmen TM & ©2014 DC Comics. Kick Ass 3 TM & ©2014 Mark Millar, John Romita Jr, & Marvel Comics.

p5-10 Fear Agent TM & ©2014 Rick Remender & Tony Moore.

p11-14 Guardians of the Galaxy images ©Marvel Studios, Wald Disney Pictures 2014.

p15-20 Star Mage TM & ©2014 J.C. De La Torre & IDW Publishing

p22-26 RoboCop TM & ©Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studio, Inc. All rights reserved.

p28-31 Rai, Armor Hunters, Bloodshot, Harbinger, Delinquents, and Doctor Mirage TM & ©2014 Valiant Entertainment Inc.

p32-35 Maleficent Photo Credits Film Frame and ©Disney 2014. All rights reserved.

p37-42 Gulliver's Travels ©2014 Marvel Comics. Wonder Woman, Action Comics, Superman TM & ©2014 DC Comics. Frankenstein ©2014 Bernie Wrightson. Transmetropolitan ©2014 Warren Ellis & Darick Robertson. Saga TM & ©2014 Brian K. Vaugn & Fiona Staples. Manhattan Projects TM & ©2014 Jonathan Hickman & Nick Pitarra. Think Tank ©2014 Top Cow & Matt Hawkins.

p45-47 Alien TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved.

p48-52 Clockwork Angels TM & ©2014 Core Music Publishing, a division of The Anthem Entertainment Group Inc.

p53-55 Edge of Tomorrow ©2014 Warner Brothers Entertainment. All rights reserved. Jupiter Ascending ©2014 Warner Brothers Entertainment. Dawn of the Planet of the Apes TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved. Guardians of the Galaxy ©2014 MVLFFLLC. TM & ©Marvel Comics ©Disney 2014. All rights reserved. Big Hero 6 ©Disney 2014. All rights reserved. Interstellar ©Paramount Pictures and Warner Brothers Pictures.

p57-62 Star Trek: City on the Edge of Forever ©2014 CBS Studios. Harlan Ellison ® 2014 Harlan Ellison.

p63-69 Extinction Parade, Harlem Hellfighters ©2014 Max Brooks.

p70-76 Ross Richie photo ©Boom! Studios. Regular Show TM & ©2014 Cartoon Network. Day Men, Dead Letters, Empty Man, The Woods TM & ©Boom Entertainment, Inc. Suicide Risk TM & ©Boom Entertainment, Inc. & Mike Carey. Big Trouble in Little China TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved.

p77-88 Star Wars TM & ©2014 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. Spider-Man & Spidey TM & ©2014 Marvel Comics.

p89-92 Big Trouble in Little China TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved. Star Trek: City on the Edge of Forever ©2014 CBS Studios. Rai TM & ©2014 Valiant Entertainment, Inc. Superman TM & ©2014 DC Comics. Nightbreed TM & ©2014 Clive Barker. Witchfinder ©2014 Mike Mignola & Dark Horse Comics. Armor Hunters TM & ©Valiant Entertainment, Inc. Super Secret Crisis War ©2014 Cartoon Network. The Blood Queen TM & ©2014 Dynamite Entertainment. Dr Who TM & ©2014 BBC Worldwide. MPH ©2014 Mark Millar, Duncan Fregredo. Outcast ©2014 Robert Kirkman. Princess Ugg ©2014 Ted Naifeh. Vampirella TM & ©2014 Dynamite Entertainment. The Wicked and the Divine ©2014 Kieron Gillen, Jaime McKelvie, Matthew Wilson. The Woods ©2014 Boom Entertainment, Inc. Batman 66 Green Hornet ©2014 DC Comics, Green Hornet Inc.

p94-95 Detective Comics, Swamp Thing TM & ©2014 DC Comics.

p96-97 The Strain TM & ©2014 Guillermo Del Toro. The Bunker ©2014 Joshua Hale Fialkov, Joe Infurnari. Sheltered ©2014 Ed Brisson, John Christmas. DMZ, House of Mystery TM & ©2014 DC Comics. Alias ©2014 Brian Michael Bendis & Marvel Comics. Manifest Destiny ©2014 Chris Dingess, Matthew Roberts. Judge Dredd TM & ©2014 Rebellion A/S. Devils Hopyard ©2014 Brendan Deneen, Szymon Kundranski, & Ardden Entertainment.

p98-102 Fear Agent TM & ©2014 Rick Remender & Tony Moore. Saga TM & ©2014 Brian K. Vaugn & Fiona Staples. Serenity TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved. Elephant Men ©2014 Richard Starkings. Alien, Predator, Alien Vs Predator TM & ©2014 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, Inc. All rights reserved. Star Wars TM & ©2014 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved.

C3 Walter Simonson's Ragnarok TM & ©2014 Walter Simonson & IDW Publishing.

Next Issue

If you aren't reading *Bleeding Cool Magazine*, you're missing out on the best insider comic collecting magazine being published. Summer time means big new comics and crossover events industry wide and Bleeding Cool has you covered with news, previews, and speculation! Join us as we celebrate IDW's 15th anniversary in style with a look back on one of the biggest success stories in comics. We celebrate all things San Diego and how to turn a trip to the Mecca of comics into a tidy profit! RICH JOHNSTON provides his unique viewpoint on the secrets the big companies don't want you to know about. Pay for your comic collection with savvy tips. Come celebrate the comic book medium with us! Delivering over 100 pages per issue on a bi-monthly release schedule, each issue is full of articles that are NOT AVAILABLE ON THE WEB!

Item Code: APR140957

TM and © 2014 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved." TM and © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.

THE INCREDIBLE
MONA
THE STRANGEST FEKKIN' RELEASES OF ALL TIME!
IS HE SCANNER OR RIPPER OR...
IS HE BOTH
E
E
M
P
I
R